

ALL THE YEAR ROUND.

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NEVER FORGOTTEN.

PART THE SECOND.

CHAPTER XXVII. "OLD FOLEY."

SIR JOHN WESTENDE, though a squire, was crafty enough in his generation. He thought Miss Manuel's counsel good as to the secrecy, and did not show his hand too soon. He was even friendly with his nephew, and said to him in his rough way, "Well, if you will make a born ass of yourself, you must." But at home he indemnified himself by swearing and railing at his daughters, telling them they were "a hopeless, helpless pack," and that he was "sick of the whole lot;" ending generally with a violent question as to "what were they staring at him in that way for?" and finally bidding them "get out of his sight, for he couldn't stand them!" And the poor frightened motherless girls, who had this paternal food served to them every day, with the regularity of meals, fled away from his presence like a flock of sheep from the shepherd's dog.

Lady Laura, too, had a consciousness of a danger. For the first time in her life she began to give way to a sense of hopelessness, and to give entrance to the grim and gloomy visitors called forebodings. As she turned round to north, south, east, and west successively, and saw the passage growing blocked in each direction, she began to feel sudden sinkings of the heart for the first time during her fifty or sixty years' struggle. These, however, might have been the natural weakness of coming age. She had fought, suffered, and received such cruel scars, that it was no wonder she should feel pains.

From the first she had divined the opposition from Sir John Westende, and had tried to bring him over. But she well knew he had never forgiven her—not so much for the mortification, as for the years of tyranny which she had indirectly brought on him. For he was one of those ferocious wild animals who roar, and tear, and even devour the spectators, but who are surprisingly tame and docile under the eye of the keeper. She even tried to stir the cold ashes of the old romance, with her fan, and let a few of the white particles float in the air, but this she saw was only a further stimulant. She then wisely gave up all attempts at conciliation, and determined for fighting in the open field.

He went to consult Miss Manuel again. He burst into his old complaints. "Is it not shameful?" he said. "There should be an act of parliament to protect boys against these women. I'll show the whole system up, if I die for it. On my soul, I believe she will fuddle him some night, put him in a coach, and marry him before the child knows what he is doing. The worst is, I don't see my way. Can you think of something?"

Miss Manuel thought a moment. "You know Sir Hopkins Pocock?" she said. "Very well. A wretched restless agitating creature, who would sell his soul for place. Go to him, and talk of your influence. That private family skeleton we spoke of the other day," she said, smiling, "is in some museum in the country somewhere. It has been smuggled away, but can be recovered."

Sir John, a country gentleman, did not quite follow. "What about skeletons?" he said.

"I mean," said Miss Manuel, "the little secret story you hinted at the other day. It may be worth nothing: but still, where the interest of a child, your ward, is concerned, everything is fair. You might use this as a lever."

"A lever! yes," said Sir John, still doubtful; "but where did you get about the skeleton?"

"A mere figure of speech," said she; "a way they have of talking. Or stay," she said; "there is Major Carter, who knows all the world, and is flattered by attention. Ask him to dine, and he may help you."

Sir John Westende took both courses. From Sir Hopkins, who cringed to him with senile homage, he heard of an old Peninsular colonel whom he himself had known, and Major Carter, who knew all the world, was likely enough to have fallen in with him.

"If I could only light on that old Foley now," he thought. "He knows and knew everything, and every story. But he is dead long ago; had to live at some of those wretched half-pay French foreignering places." (Sir John took the true squire's view of Boulogne and other foreign ports, as being solely created for English gentlemen of limited means.) He asked Major Carter about it.

"The old colonel dead?" said the major. "Not he! Lives at Dunkirk, of all places in the world! But he says he gets his rubber there. He was here last week, but has gone back, I am afraid. The colonel's purse is not very deep,

unless, indeed, he has made something out of his whistle here. Shall we go and see him, Sir John? By the way, I forget. Did you know him?"

"Not met him for years," said Sir John. "But I have a particular reason for wishing to meet him now." Then he told Major Carter (whom he said he saw was "a man of the world") what this reason was.

"Just the man!" cried the major. "You have a surprising instinct, Sir John! Why, he could write a book, the most delightful work of our times, all the scandal, all the divorces, all the escaudres—the *true* history, you understand, Sir John? He has them all at his fingers' ends. It would be the most fascinating work."

The old Peninsular colonel must have made profit out of his whistle; for he was still in town, in the bay-window of his club, with his newspaper attached to a stick, which he handled as if he were a pointsman signalling a train. He had a very large hat on. The blood in his face was so marbled and extravasated that it seemed as if made out of good Bologna sausage; while his stock was so stiff and straight that it seemed as if he were always looking out of an iron chimney-pot after having newly swept a gigantic chimney. He was glad to see Carter, and was glad to see Carter's friend, for he had just done with his pointsman's flag, and was thinking of sherry. "Have something?" he said. "No?" And having "had something" himself, the marbled Bologna sausage surface seemed to become illuminated from within, and glowed.

The major very soon led them across France into the Peninsula, and took them back some thirty or forty years, and called up Lord Wellington and Pack, and Beresford, and that "chicken-hearted" scoundrel, Joseph. "Why, dammy!" roared the colonel, the Bologna sausage distending alarmingly, "we had a little drummer that would have stood up to him, and made him run."

"You had queer days in Madrid that time, colonel," said the major.

"Ay, ay," said the Peninsular colonel, "both then and later. I was there in 'twenty-five, too, and met some of the old set. What times we had, sir. Dammy, sir, there are no *men* on earth now. No men, sir, with real heads and stomachs. They don't know how to drink! It ain't life now; at least, it ain't life as it used to be"—then the colonel added a dropping shot after a volley—"dammy!"

"The colonel," said Major Carter to Sir John, with great approbation, "knows, and has seen a great deal. It is really instructive to hear him."

"Bless you!" said Colonel Foley (using the benediction precisely in the same meaning as he did his favourite malediction); "Bless you! I could tell you stories by the yard! Ay, sir! and stories that would take your wind away, sir; and, sir, about some of the—ve-ry—first—families in the country," added he, stooping forward, and speaking slow; "the very first. Ay, sir, and some of your fine high women," he continued, glowing at the recollection of some ne-

glect, "who now give themselves airs; I could have them at my knees, crying, 'For God's sake, don't expose us! Dammy, colonel, don't!'"

"Did you ever," said Sir John, a little impatient at the colonel's reminiscences, "fall in with a person called Fermor?"

"Fermor? Fermor?" said the colonel, searching his memory. "Ah, to be sure! I suppose I didn't know Lady Laura—a fine spanking creature she was! I could tell you some of her games. 'By the Lord, sir, the night of the fresco business down at the what-d'-ye-call-'em villa on the Thames, and we had the walks lit up, excepting the arbour, which was forgotten, dammy, sir, if I didn't—"

Major Carter here nervously interposed, "Our friend, Sir John, is connected, I believe—"

"No, no," said Sir John, hotly. "I have nothing to say to them. And I don't care what is said of them. There was a story, Colonel Foley, some thirty years ago—as a club man you knew it, we all knew it; I should know it myself, but somehow my memory does not help me now. I want to find that story. You remember a scampish fellow they had among them, Fermor's brother, that went to the dogs?"

"Ah! you're right, you're right," said Colonel Foley, with great enjoyment. "Ah, Jack Fermor, I knew him, sir! I once lent him ten pounds, and dammy, sir, if I wasn't the only man he ever paid—"

"But what was the business?" asked Sir John, impatiently; "it was cushioned in some wonderful way."

"Bless your soul," said the colonel, with the same absence of spiritual meaning, "that was *her*, all *her*! She managed the whole of it. She had the spirit of ten men. Did you ever know that she went over herself, and settled it all?"

"Ah!" said Sir John, with great interest, "that was the way it never got out."

"Exactly, sir. It was the middle of winter, too, with ice, sir, as thick as that book, sir," pointing to a London Directory. "And up-on my soul, sir, she was expecting to be confined of her first child. That I know. And I call that a fine, plucky, spanking thing of *her*. As for the quiet sneak Fermor she married, he wasn't fit to sweep that crossing, sir."

"He was a poor creature," said Sir John, cordially.

"She settled the whole business, sir. Saw the counsel, police, judges, every man Jack of them, talked to them, bought them—seventeen and sixpence went a long way then in those foreigner-ing courts—and brought off her man! What was better, sir, not a soul could make out what it was all about."

"Precisely," said Sir John. "I never could get at it."

"That was *her*, you see," said the colonel. "If I didn't admire *her* for it! I was one of the few that knew about the business, and dammy

if she didn't bring me round—round and round again, sir. Now, is she going on still?"

"What did I tell you, Sir John?" said Major Carter, in delight. "Is not the colonel pleasant? We ought to get him to come and fix a day before he goes back to Dunkirk."

"Ah, yes," said Sir John, eagerly, "the very thing. You must dine with me, colonel; a little snug private dinner—only ourselves."

"Dammy," said the colonel, "how gluey I feel. They swindle us at this place with their infernal bottles—they don't half fill 'em. Here, waiter, soda. They keep the worst lot of servants in the kingdom. Well, where was I? I could talk this way until midnight. Here, you! bring that after me to the smoking-room. You don't mind coming there, eh?"

Sir John was a man of business, and had his time pretty well filled up. "I tell you what, colonel," he said, looking at his watch, "dine with me to-day—you and Carter here—at my club. A snug little thing. Only ourselves."

"I will, upon my soul," said the colonel, eagerly, and almost ferociously. "That will be more like it. Good Lord!" he said, by no means conscious of any devotional appeal, "what things I could tell you, if I only could collect my wits. Talk of old What-his-name's Recollections, I'm told they're all reading, now! Why, dammy, I could beat him against a wall story for story. Why, they're nothing but slops, mere slops, sir!"

CHAPTER XXVIII. COLONEL FOLEY'S REMINISCENCES.

THAT evening, at Sir John's club—the Country Gentleman's—which, the colonel said, he was glad to see had none of their "eternally lost" gewgaw "sugar-stick" stuck over it inside and out—none of your "sickening theatrical scene-shifting places—all windows," where you caught your death of cold, but a snug old-fashioned place, where all the high-priced papers were taken in, and where brass buttons and yellow trousers were familiar to the eye: at this club, then, in a private room, the three gentlemen had a pleasant little dinner.

"This is something like," said the colonel. "I call this a place for a gentleman! Dammy, I don't want to be stuck up in a plate-glass case, like a dried fish in a museum, so that the people in the streets may stare up at you. I don't call *that* sort of thing a club. And the stuff they give you! You might as well put a file down my throat as the liquor we had to-day." Which community in the participation of the brandy was a pardonable delusion on the colonel's part.

He was very amusing, this old colonel. But some of his stories were frightful. *He* did not deal in what he called "slops." Men and women—widows, virgins, and wives—he slaughtered wholesale—like the great Human Sacrifices at Dahomy. Later he came back to the subject of the morning.

"I never saw such a wild scamp of a creature as that Fermor. Our wine merchant, indeed, every-

body's wine merchant; and gave capital wine, I must say. Gave more for nothing than he did for money. No fellows were entertained better. That was 'twenty or 'twenty-five. Let me see, now, which was it, dammy?" and the Peninsular colonel began to ruminate over this point, for his old memory, like his old eye, was getting very dim. "Twenty-five it was. I have it now, the year I got my captaincy (Sergeant, who was before me, was shot in a duel by the Spanish minister's son). Well, that Fermor soon, as you may imagine, found the wine business not to answer. He was so extravagant—nothing could stand him—and as wild as a hare. Very thick with the governor, and the governor's wife too—a fine woman, though—but so stuck up, you know. Dammy," said the colonel, excited by the memory of repulse, "there was no going within a mile of her. Why, I dined there four days in the week. Well, when I came again, dammy if the wine business hadn't all broken up; and what do you suppose my friend was at, eh, now? What do you say, now?"

Neither Carter nor Sir John could say; nor, if they could, would they.

"Why, he had set up a little play; nothing short of that. Instead of the wine, we got—you understand—cards and chicken hazard. It was great fun. He got a lot of money out of us. He made it pay, sir. But there was always plenty to eat and drink, too. I never enjoyed myself so much."

Again the colonel took in sherry, and again the colonel's cheeks fired out with the suddenness of the illumination of St. Peter's at Rome.

"Where was I? Well, Jack Fermor went ahead. There were some businesses took place, I can tell you. Bless you, I could sit here until midnight, and be not half done. There was a good pigeoning—in fact (of course excepting some old friends like myself), it was *all* pigeoning. And it was said, too, there was some drugging and hocussing. That was the way young Ascot Price was finished off. They got five thousand out of him, and he shot himself next day. O, Jack Fermor, he was a wonderful scamp! Wonderful!"

There was a tinge of regret in the tone with which the colonel spoke of his old friend—regret mingled with admiration at perhaps the general ill success of such gifts.

"Dammy," said the colonel, apologetically, "I believe it was a queer state of things from beginning to end; but, you see, there was nothing on the surface a gentleman could object to, and it seemed all quite square. A gentleman must find some way of filling up his time in a place like that."

Vice having paid this little act of grateful homage to Virtue, the colonel went on:

"But if Jack 'was a lad,'" went on the colonel, "what do you suppose his friend was? Now, what do you suppose his friend was?" No one, of course, could say. "We were a queer lot out at that time, I can tell you. I suppose never

was there such a set got together since the days of Gomorrah!" (Sir John shivered a little at this unpleasant allusion.) "Well, sir, he had a friend—a quiet soul, with a wife and three little children, a decent, quiet, thoroughly good fellow, in the wine business too; and, dammy! if he didn't want to stay quietly in his wine, if he was only let. But he wasn't. Jack Fermor, sir, had a trick of making other fellows as like himself as two peas. Well, sir, this quiet sheep of a Manuel——"

"Manuel!" said Carter, starting.

"Manuel!" said Sir John, thinking of Miss Manuel; "how odd."

"So it was," said the colonel. "But it was odder when Jack got this creature *well* into his hands, and got his wine, and his money, and his savings, into his hands too. He did it uncommon clever, did Jack. He was training him, he said. Well, there was another man," he went on, "who came out there on business, who had a young girl of a wife, whom he was so fond of. Dammy," said the colonel, laughing, "how we used to laugh at him. He was a Scotchman, and set up to be a cautious, quiet, calculating rascal. But I used to go and see him very often, and so used our set, for reasons that you will perhaps understand. Eh! What d'ye say?"

And the colonel here half closed one of his odious old eyes with exquisite meaning.

"There was about twenty years between him and this child he called his wife. She might have been his daughter five times over: so what do you suppose this stupid set himself to do? Why, he set up for being the old fellow, the fatherly dodge, and kept trying to amuse her in every way, and kept coming to us and bothering; 'Now do come and see that poor child, and talk to her. She wants amusement, and I don't know *how* to amuse her.' And didn't we go? O, not at all." And here again the Peninsular half-closed his odious old eye with extraordinary significance. "And one day," he went on, "we took it into our heads to bring that wild scamp Jack Fermor. And Jack Fermor took into *his* head one day to bring our soft friend Manuel. And our soft friend—leaving his own lady, and his two girls, and one boy, at home—came very often to talk to her. Do you see what is coming now?"

The major did, or conveyed by his manner that he did. Sir John did not quite follow.

"He was the queerest young old fellow I ever saw, this Dr. Meadows (that was the Scotchman's name). He must have been close to forty then, and as stiff and hard as ramrods. We never saw him bend, and we used to call him 'Rod Meadows,' or Roddy Meadows. But it was plain that he was wild about the little white child he called his wife—infatuated, in fact; and it was plain, too, that the little chit did not care particularly for *him*. I may say, without vanity, she liked the company of your humble servant a *deu-see* deal better," added the colonel, with his favourite objectionable motion of his eye. "A lot of us used to come and sit with her for hours,

and make her laugh; and I must say your humble servant didn't sit for the shortest time; no, nor he didn't drive out now and then, and walk a little on what they called their Prado! Dammy, sir, those were the days for real life.

"Well, sir, I knew the game old Roddy Meadows was at. It was the gratitude dodge, and the regard, you know, ripening, as they call it, into affection. I have seen life," said the colonel, laughing heartily, "and I never met *that* sort of ripening yet. It didn't ripen with him, my boy, at any rate; but," added the colonel, with a dramatic slowness and significance, "it was ripening with somebody else.

"O," said the colonel, beginning to ramble a little, his fishy eye staggering somewhat, as it were, "I could go on from this till morning about those days. There's nothing like them now. *These* ain't what you can call days! As for that fellow who writes books about Recollections" (this was always an irritant with the colonel), "what can *he* have to tell, dammy? Stirabout, sir! Tapioca! Gruel, gruel, sir!" said the colonel, looking almost ill with disgust; "how I hate such slops!"

Most of the colonel's friends knew that about this period he strengthened the weaker portions of his conversation with oaths more strong and frequent. They were a relief, and sent him on the faster.

"Well, about that scamp Fermor. He was soon at the end of his tether. He had got all he could get, that was to be begged, or borrowed, or—No," said the colonel, closing the eye that was in liquor with some difficulty, but with a grotesque humour, "no; he was now coming to *that*."

"I see," said Carter, smiling.

Sir John, being a country gentleman, did not see nearly so quickly. "Coming to what?"

"Dammy!" Colonel Foley went on, "if I believe he had only the coat on his back left. He was always in and out of the Scotch fellow's house. I believe he got round the creature a good bit, and got some dollars out of him. As for the Scotch doctor's money, I needn't tell you, who are a man of the world, Carter" (Sir John moved a little uneasily in his chair at this rather pointed exclusion of himself from that class), "that he was not likely to pay *that* up in a hurry. And why the devil should he? But the worst was, he didn't stop there—This sherry, here, is like mother's milk to me. I am scalded with the stuff they give us at Dunkirk. As for their clarets and 'ordinary,' by the Lord, sir, it really scrapes me here—here, sir," said the colonel, laying his palm on his watch-chain. "Well, to be short about it, the Scotch fellow, who had gone to the country and wasn't to be back for a week, came back one night quite suddenly, and found—Dammy now, what d'ye suppose he found?" And the colonel, stretching over for what he had called mother's milk, leisurely filled himself a great glass, as it were to fill up the time while the others were busy specu-

lating. "By Jove! if he didn't find our friend Jack at his desk, stuffing his waistcoat with his notes and gold. Flat burglary, sir! All regularly planned! A most outrageous business. You see it was flag-delic; no getting over it. *There* was the awkwardness."

"And this was Fermor?" asked Sir John, eagerly.

"No one else. The Scotchman had him pinned by the throat in a second, and was calling in the watch. But the other was on his marrow-bones whining for mercy, and I think the Scotchman would have killed him. But—and here was the best of this *con-founded* joke; I declare I went near to bursting with laughter when I heard it" (and his sausage skin went near to rupture at the bare recollection)—"Jack, with wonderful presence of mind, said if he would let him off, he would tell him something about his wife. He didn't know at the moment that something else had been packed up and carried off, you see!" added the colonel, making his jelly eye tumble backwards and forwards with extraordinary meaning. "But he did in an hour. Dammy, sir, if that smooth pious fellow Manuel hadn't gone off with the wife! and had her waiting ready at an inn outside the town. A few of the longheads had a notion of what was coming." And the colonel hinted with his awful old eye that he was one of these. "It was very bad," he went on, "very bad; for you see, Manuel left his own wife and three children, and I must say," added the colonel, in a tone of moral censure, "he had no excuse, literally, *no* excuse. Positively a fine woman. Well, when the Scotchman found all this out, he was near going mad. I never saw such ridiculous nonsense. 'Dammy,' I said to him, '*what are you about?* Don't make a snivelling donkey of yourself before the town. Take my advice, and say nothing about the business.' But no. I believe he wanted to cut the fellow's throat, and his own afterwards. He went after him for a week, hunted him, caught him, and brought him back. Dammy! I think he wanted to cut him up into collops, and fry him slowly. Sir, you don't know what that family owes to me, and how they treated me! Who was it brought them through that business, that kept the thing quiet and comfortable, but Tom Foley, and perhaps Johnny Adams? The fool would have gone into the street, and poked his injuries into any man's face. I never met such a born donkey. I kept the thing down, and wrote to his relations. He swore he would have the lives of the two—and clapped them into jail. I declare to you, that gamey woman, Lady Laura, was out with us in a week, with the ice like half a foot of cold iron on the ground. And up-on—my—salvation, sir," added the colonel, mysteriously, "Sir Thomas Dick, the Queen's own medical fellow, told me often, he didn't know the minute the thing would have come off! Well, sir, she came. She saw the Scotchman privately, was on her knees to him privately, got round him some way, told

him lies, and, what is more, got him to swallow them. And I can tell you, as I am a living man and hope to be saved—dammy!" added the colonel, with curious self-contradiction, "she worked the thing, sir, so that she got police and law and all those infernal things out of the affair. The Scotchman took back his money, and our friend was sent away to another place. I never heard of Manuel after. I believe he got off to America, and his widow or wife and her three brats would have starved, if the English hadn't made up a subscription for them. They got a pound of my money, I know. You *have* to put down, you know, when everybody puts down. I heard they went to England afterwards. And didn't she get round Adams and me! She was a splendid woman *then*," added the colonel, with ruminative admiration. "Quite thrown away on the poor creature they married her to! Well furnished, sir, *here*," said the colonel, with increased relish, and laying his old hands on his shirt front. "She swore both me and Adams solemnly," he added, with winy reverence, "never to breathe a word of the business. 'Pon my soul!" said the colonel, getting more and more excited, "if I had only worked my chances, I should have done well in that quarter. But the fellow that boasts of his affairs is a sneak. Still, I could tell my say as well as most men. Though," added the colonel, thoughtfully, "I found her out afterwards in a clever trick. She got me a majority in a regiment, and, dammy, sir, if I didn't find out, just in the nick of time, that they were sending it to the African coast. I should have been dead in a week. But she caught poor Adams in the same way, who was not so knowing as Tom Foley. She got him on some swamp duty, which made short work of him. But, after all, she was a deu-sed clever woman. O, deu-sed!"

Colonel Foley had not much to say on this point, and his face seemed to have grown so strained, and tightened, and inflamed—so reeking with hot vapours and turpentine spirit—that it seemed dangerous to go near him with a light. His voice, too, was growing thick, and seemed to be fighting its way to his throat through a crowd. Reverting indignantly to the military colonel who had written the Recollections, he characterised them once more, with bitter contempt, as "Slops and gruel!" and was presently assisted to a cab, and sent home.

Sir John Westende flew to Miss Manuel. "I have Lady Laura now," he said. "Knowing as she is, she shall be no match for me."

He then told her as much of the story as applied to the Fermors. "I managed it uncommonly cleverly," he said. "I wormed it out of an old fellow who knows everything."

"You should be a detective, Sir John," she said, as though she were patting a horse's neck. "They should put you in the force. I shall be quite afraid of you."

"Nonsense," he said, much pleased. "But let *her* look out. She'll find me a policeman, I

can tell her. As sure as I am a living man, I shall expose her. If it comes to that, I'll go to the church door and tell the whole thing out, I will."

"She won't let it go to that," said Miss Manuel. "She is too clever. You have the game in your own hands now, Sir John, and can play that poor woman like a fish in one of your own ponds down at Westende. How cruel you are. I am in terror of you."

"By Jove! that is what I shall do," said he, thinking he was deriving a new idea from his own mind. "I have a plan of my own, Miss Manuel. I shall play her. There is no hurry. I'll give a little more line. That's what I shall do; and pull her up with a jerk. Ha, ha! I'll teach her!"

Sir John, grumbling, and lashing himself in a sort of mulish fury, presently rose to go. When he was gone, her eyes flashed. "They are all working for me," she said; "unclean spirits all; but no matter. They are all converging to the one point. The end is not far away, and it will be soon time to gather up the threads." Then she thought tenderly, but exultingly, of the loved and lost darling that she fancied was looking down on her as she advanced on this course, and whose soft gentle soul she strangely believed would be soothed and propitiated—like some cruel heathen idol—by bloody human sacrifices. Presently another visitor entered, when a soft light passed over her face, and the ruthless spirit she was fondling in her arms disengaged itself and fled away. It was Young Brett.

MUD.

MUD, in its several stages of stony, sticky, stodgy, slushy, and washy. Mud as it exists between high and low tide levels on the shores of seas, and the banks of rivers. This is the sense in which we take mud for our present subject. This strip, more or less narrow according to its steepness, is covered with water twice every day, and twice every day laid bare again, by the tide.

We will take the case of the River Thames. The sovereign is sovereign over all the flowing rivers in her dominions; not exactly as owner, but as a trustee for the nation, to ensure free navigation and useful adaptation of the streams. It happens, however, that the City of London, represented by the Lord Mayor and Corporation, has over and over again put in a claim to the Thames within metropolitan limits—the Thames water, the Thames bed beneath the water, and the Thames mud by the side of the water. The Crown has stoutly resisted this claim. The fight began in earnest about twenty years ago. The City had, in consideration of certain fees or rents, granted licenses for the construction of piers, jetties, wharves, piles, landing-stages, and so forth, on the strip of land between high and low water. The Crown now said, "This is mine;" the City replied, "No it isn't;" and so they went at it. The City acknowledged the original right of the

sovereign to rivers and beds of rivers, but appealed to certain old charters and grants by which important privileges had been conceded to the loyal and faithful Londoners. Seven long years of battling ensued; and, when it was found that the Crown was getting the best of it, seven years more were spent in determining how far, and in what way, the Lord Mayor should give up his claim to be King of the Thames. At length, an act of parliament was passed in eighteen hundred and fifty-seven, by which the City yielded up its powers or claims, and the Crown entrusted *its* powers to a board of commissioners, for the good of the community. These commissioners, whose duties are denoted by the name "Thames Conservancy," were twelve in number, nominated in three groups by the Crown, the City, and the Trinity House. They were made lords of the Thames, from Staines down to Yantlet Creek near the mouth of the Medway. They may build docks, wharves, jetties, stairs, and landing-places; or they may license other persons to do so; and they take cognisance of other matters relating to the navigation of the mighty river. Fifty or sixty, more or less, vessels are sunk in the Thames every year, by some mishap or other; and the conservators have to raise and remove them. The conservators are always dredging the bed of the river in shallow spots, to improve the navigation. They have made the new steam-boat piers at Lambeth, at London Bridge, at Cherry Garden Stairs, at Millwall, and elsewhere. They every year grant permission, on the payment either of a bonus or a rent, to river-side folk for the placing of piles, suction-pipes, mooring chains, mooring stones, wharves, causeways, quays, platforms, boat-houses, slipways, steps, stairs, barge-beds, coal landings, draw-docks, landing piers, wharf-walls, jetties, embankments, gridirons, gangways, shear-legs, and camp-sheds (sloping wooden platforms resting on the mud), for facilitating the landing and embarking of goods and passengers. Sometimes, they fight the Trinity House about matters connected with beaconage and ballast; sometimes, they do battle with river-side proprietors, concerning the right to construct steam-boat piers. They try to catch hold of any manufacturer who throws mud, dirt, clinkers, ashes, offal, dung, offensive liquids, gas refuse, or any other objectionable matters into our purling crystal stream. One year they came down mightily upon three persons who had added old mats, rotten pine-apples, and damaged German yeast, to the water of the Thames. On the other hand, they are themselves occasionally called to account as offenders.

What, would the reader think, is the money-value of a toe? The conservators were the defendants in an action "to recover damages for an injury to the toe of Jane Miller, by the negligent shifting of the landing-board on a steam-boat, by a pierman in the defendants' employ, on their floating-pier at London Bridge." The injury to Jane Miller's toe was settled by a jury as equivalent to fifteen pounds sterling;

Jané Miller's law expenses were thirty-seven pounds, and those of the conservators forty-nine; so the Kings of the Thames had to pay about one hundred pounds altogether for a single toe.

The conservators receive from forty to sixty thousand pounds a year, in rents and tolls of various kinds, from dock and canal companies, water companies, steam-boat owners, ship-owners, &c.; out of this revenue they pay their working expenses, and the interest of a loan which has supplied them with capital. After seven years' experience, it has been deemed proper to modify the constitution and powers of the board of conservators; and to this end an act was passed in the recent session of parliament. There are now to be six elected conservators, in addition to the twelve nominated by the Crown, the Corporation, and the Trinity House; these six are to be elected by ship-owners, steam-boat owners, steam-tug owners, dock owners, wharfingers, and lightermen—so everybody is to have a finger in the mud-pie, if he be immediately interested in the Thames. The selling of sand and gravel from the bed of the river, for ballast, is to be transferred from the Trinity House to the conservators; these gentlemen may be their own ballast heavers if they like; but, whether or not, the Queen is to get a share of the proceeds of this said mud.

Much legislation has been needed to determine whether the Queen or certain of her subjects are lawful owners of the Thames and its mud.

In Cornwall the contest has presented rather singular features. The Duchy of Cornwall has for many generations belonged to the Prince of Wales, or to the sovereign when there was no such prince. The present prince, for instance, is a little king in that county, with a little cabinet of ministers of his own. He nominates the sheriffs; he sits in council to hear appeals from the decisions of the Lord Warden of the Stannaries (or tin-miners' court); and he obtains rents or royalties from the workers of mines in various parts of the duchy, and from the occupiers of property of various kinds. This income, after defraying every expense, leaves a snug fifty thousand pounds a year net, to help Albert Edward and Alexandra to pay their housekeeping bills. Long may they live to enjoy it! But this is not the point; we must stick to the mud. The Queen claims the foreshore of Cornwall as well as that of all other parts of her dominions; and she claims also the ownership of the bed of the sea itself to a certain distance around all her islands. Of the three parallel strips, the dry shore is owned by some landowner or other; the foreshore, or alternately wet-and-dry strip, is claimed by the Queen; and the strip which is always under the sea is claimed by her Majesty also. But lo! in our south-westernmost county a difficulty has more than once arisen. The Prince of Wales, through his law officers, has told his royal mother that, however dutiful he wishes to be, he must claim certain sovereign rights over the

sea-margin of his duchy. The Queen, through her law officers, informs the prince that, however much she loves him, she must assert her claim to the whole of the sea-margin of Britain. Now, it happens that, in Cornwall, if a rich vein of tin or copper lies near the coast, the miners will follow it whithersoever it tends, even under the foreshore, and under the bed of the sea. In one memorable instance, the miners actually began a mine out at sea, a mile distant from the shore; making a coffer-dam to keep out the water, and then beginning to dig when they had laid bare the bed of the sea. In all other cases, however, the under-sea workings are extensions of those which were begun under the dry land. At the famous Botallack Mine, the workings extend under the foreshore, and then six or eight hundred feet under the sea itself, with a crust or roof overhead so thin that the roar of the ocean can be heard. At the Huel Mine, some years ago, the workings were carried so far that the miners had to fly, lest the sea should wash them out altogether by breaking through the thin crust. It is only within a comparatively recent period that anybody thought of claiming rent or royalty for such a singular mining region as this under the sea. When, however, it came to be acknowledged that mines underneath rivers, foreshore, and the bed of the sea, ought to pay royalty as well as those under dry land, rival claimants to the royalty appeared. The prince as duke, his mother as queen, the prince as sovereign lord of Cornwall, his mother as sovereign lady of the whole realm—which should it be? Very wisely, they did not "come into court." The advisers on both sides, knowing that the matter would be a complicated one, gave full powers as arbitrator to one of the learned judges who was more than usually looked up to for that kind of lore. How many statutes and charters, decisions and grants, the learned judge went over, we are afraid to guess; but he ultimately propounded this award—that the Queen ought to have a right to all the minerals under the actual bed of the sea; whereas the prince has, or ought to have, a right to all the minerals under the mud of the Cornish foreshore.

But in other counties, where the peculiar rights of the Duke of Cornwall do not prevail, the foreshore is more valuable to the Crown. The law, while recognising the sovereign as lord (or lady) of the rivers as well as the dry land of the United Kingdom, virtually gives the sovereign the right of ownership to the singular strip which is due wholly to the action of the tides. If it be nobody's property, nobody would take care to keep it in proper order; and if it be worth anything at all, everybody would be snatching at it: hence the prudence of vesting it in some one proprietor. Whatever is upon the foreshore should pay some kind of rent; whatever is under the foreshore should pay some kind of royalty. The Crown, represented by the Commissioners of Woods and Forests, keeps a regular debtor and creditor account of all the bits of foreshore that thus come into profitable use, and goes to

law with any one who tries to evade the rental or the royalty. There was one case in which a portion of the river Dee became dry, on account of the shoaling to which that stream is much subject. A question arose as to whom the dry strip belonged. It was ultimately decided that as this strip had never had an actual individual owner while it was covered with water, no neighbouring landowner could justly lay claim to it; the Crown, as owner of the bed of the river when the water still flowed over this spot, was pronounced to be owner of the strip of dry land; and a good round sum was realised by selling it to a wealthy marquis who owns much property thereabouts. A contest of a directly opposite nature arose concerning a strip of land on the banks of the Humber. Instead of being laid bare, after having for untold ages been covered with water, it had been grass land until the river encroached upon it and converted it into foreshore. The Crown said, "This is foreshore, and is, therefore, mine." The landowner said, "This *was* grass land, and no one has ever compensated me for the loss occasioned by the encroachment of the river; the Crown should not be allowed to benefit at my expense, merely because the river has misbehaved." The law decided, however, for the Crown, who obtained a handsome sum for permitting the formation of a railway along the debatable strip. The Liverpool Corporation were called upon to pay, and did pay, a considerable amount to the Crown, when they began to operate upon an ill-favoured and ill-odoured strip of mud on the Birkenhead side of the Mersey for the construction of docks. During the course of the astonishing improvements which the river Clyde has undergone during the last half century, certain strips of land have been laid bare which were formerly covered with water, and certain other strips have been brought within the river's grasp which were formerly dry land; in both cases narrow margins of muddy foreshore suddenly acquired a commercial value, either as necessary parts of a navigable river for which tolls were charged, or as bits of dry land for agricultural or building purposes. The Crown put in a claim, and obtained decisions sufficient to recognise the royal rights in these matters, even if no immediate pecuniary benefit resulted. On one occasion there was a bit of mud for which there were almost as many claimants as there have been for Schleswig-Holstein. The Crown said, "I claim these three or four miles of foreshore and the minerals beneath it;" a noble earl said, "I claim as lord of the manor;" another said, "I claim under a special grant from the Crown ever so long ago;" others said, "We, as freeholders, claim such bits of this foreshore as lie in front of our respective freeholds;" and some copper-smelters said, "We already pay royalties to the freeholders, and we will not pay them to the Crown also." This struggle began just twenty years ago; and the latest report of the Woods and Forests shows that it is still going on, with a prospect generally in favour of the Crown, but a resolute opposition from a firm or obstinate

Welshman—firm or obstinate according as he may prove to be right or wrong.

The annual reports issued by the board just adverted to, afford numerous exemplifications of the modes in which the Crown—in such cases a royal mudlark—picks up a little money out of these strips of mud. We all of us know something about Brighton, and the strip of semi-pebbly, semi-muddy, beach which is covered with water twice a day at and near high tide. About three years ago, the Crown granted a lease of this whole strip, from Kemp Town to Hove, to the Brighton commissioners, for twenty-one years. The object was to enable the lessees to prevent nuisances on the foreshore, which would be inconsistent with the well-ordering of a bathing-place, but which would be probable if the said shore were a sort of no-man's-land. The rent is a curious one—half the value of any stone, shingle, sand, or gravel, taken up and sold by the town commissioners. More recently the Brighton west-enders have resolved to build a new pier opposite Regency-square, stretching out a thousand feet seaward; and as an acknowledgment of the fact that her Majesty is queen of the sea-bed as well as of the foreshore, they have bought (not leased) the requisite privileges for one hundred and fifty pounds. The good people of Swanage, wishing that the Isle of Purbeck should possess its own particular Brighton attractions on a small scale, built a pier without consulting the lady of the foreshore; whereupon and wherefore, the lady rapped their knuckles in a court of law—not very hard, but sufficient to show that there *is* a lady of the foreshore. Colonel Pennant, the mighty man of slate, wishing to be able to ship minerals at a sea-side village with an unpronounceable Welsh name, near Bangor, obtained foreshore-rights on payment of one pound a year rent, and a trifling royalty on all minerals shipped. A year or two ago, the Crown sold little bits of mud at Stokes Bay and Ryde to two companies concerned in establishing a new rail-and-steam route from Portsmouth or Gosport to the Isle of Wight. When the Hull docks were enlarged, in eighteen hundred and sixty-three, a strip of mud was deemed so valuable, that it was sold by the Crown for no less a sum than two thousand pounds. Fifty pounds were given by the corporation of Deal for permission to carry an iron pier across the foreshore. At Oban, in Scotland, a place becoming very well known to summer tourists, one pound was charged for permission to remove a hundred tons of gravel and stone, for the improvement of the beach and landing-place; a curious charge, the smallness of which shows that it was considered rather as the recognition of a right, than as a payment of any pecuniary value. The late Marquis of Lansdowne gave the Crown six hundred pounds for about two hundred acres of foreshore in Ireland. When the owners of that unfortunate ship, the Great Eastern, wanted to beach her, for repairs, on the Cheshire side of the Mersey, they paid the Crown one pound for

the use of the verdant and salubrious mud on which the mighty monster reposed; and when they placed her, for a still longer period, on a gigantic gridiron at Milford Haven, a mud fee of twenty pounds had to be paid. Submarine telegraph companies pay the Crown a trifle for permission to carry the cables upon or beneath the foreshore, in connecting the land portions with the sea portions. Artists pitch their photographic booths on the beach in front of pleasure-towns; and the Crown sometimes makes them pay a few shillings for permission so to do. At the spruce little upstart watering-places of Rhyl and Abergele on the Welsh coast, the lord of the manor bethought him of charging the bathing-machine owners; but the Crown said, "No, they must pay *me* a trifle, to acknowledge that the right to the beach is really mine."

We may wind up by informing the reader that the Queen pays the Queen money every year for permission to the Queen to make use of bits of mud belonging to the Queen—in other words, the Queen's Secretary of State for War pays to the Queen's Woods and Forests, ten pounds a year for the use of the foreshore on which the Shoeburyness gunnery experiments are carried on; and fifty pounds a year for foreshore on which fortifications are being built in the Isle of Portland.

SOMETHING LIKE A CONJUROR.

THOSE who have seen Indian conjurors will not think much of the poor tricks of American conjurors, claiming to be no conjurors. In what follows, the narrator tells what he and a couple of friends, who had a month's holiday-run in the Deccan, saw with their own eyes.

Early in the morning, after our arrival at Poonah, we were lounging in the verandah of the Dawk bungalow, when a loud tom-tomming called attention, and we saw a procession entering the compound of the bungalow. First came two yellow-looking fellows with long black hair and red puggerees, beating like madmen with their horny fingers on a couple of tom-toms. Then followed three or four boys dragging huge snakes over their shoulders. Next marched a tall old man, richly dressed in shawls, followed closely by two or three coolies carrying boxes. Some ragged followers with spears closed the procession. This party went round to the back of the bungalow, and presently our syces brought to us the old gentleman in the shawls, who bowed to the ground, touched his forehead, mouth, and breast to us, and began a long address, in which we were plentifully honoured as protectors of the poor, lords, masters, and royal highnesses. As for him, he was a poor snake-charmer, devil-tamer, and general doctor of magic. He had heard that some illustrious lord-sahibs had arrived, so he was come to serve us. If there were any snakes in the house he would draw them out. If there were any grey hairs in our heads he would cause them to fall out and never more

return. If any of our horses were possessed with a devil, he would cure them. In fact, he would do anything for us by the power of his art. We said we had no grey hairs or unruly horses, but we would like to see some of his juggling and snake-charming. He replied that he was our slave, and where should he serve us: in the verandah or the bungalow? We said on the sand in front of the verandah, where all was open, and we could watch his movements.

In a few minutes the whole party came round from the back of the house, and formed a semi-circle with our servants and followers. In the middle, with at least ten yards of clear space around him, sat the conjuror. By his side squatted a little nigger boy with a large box in his arms, which, after a word or two in Mahrattee language from the old conjuror, he opened and brought for our inspection. On looking in we saw a mass of cobras twisted in a lump, lying in a blanket fast asleep. The box was put on the ground a few yards from the conjuror, with the lid open. He then produced a sort of Pan-pipe, and began to play a slow and mournful air. We, from our post on the verandah, could look down into the box, and in a few seconds we saw the snakes beginning to uncurl. One who was first detached from the lump, slipped over the side of the box to the ground. The moment he was on the sand he stiffened, reared his head, opened the hood which extended on both sides of his face, and hissed violently, shooting his tongue very swiftly in and out. Meanwhile, the charmer began to play more quickly on his pipe, and the snake, turning towards him, gradually approached him. More snakes now rose in the box, some came out, and others looked over the edge, but all were hissing and looking venomous. Some went close to the man and boy, and even crawled on their clothes. They were handled with the greatest composure: both the old man and the boy taking hold of their necks from behind, as a keeper handles ferrets. But whenever any of the snakes approached the circle of spectators, it was broken by a retreat, with great appearance of dismay. On these occasions the old man redoubled the energy of his music, and generally succeeded in enticing the snakes back, but sometimes the boy had to go and fetch them. After we had looked at this performance for some minutes, one of our party observed that he believed it was all humbug, that their teeth had been extracted, and their venom-bags cut out. At any rate, he announced his intention of collaring the first snake that came near the verandah. We objected in vain, and when presently a very active-looking cobra that had been several times fetched back by the boy, approached our verandah, and the conjuror had turned his head away for an instant, with a sudden dart our friend had it by the back of the neck, and jumped down with it into the compound, holding it high over his head, and shouting to the conjuror that anybody could do that. As soon as the audience saw what he had done, they set up a tremendous yell. The old conjuror seemed

terrified, and rushed at the rash Englishman, playing his pipe like a madman. But our friend kept away from him, and swung the hissing cobra in the air. The old man entreated him to throw it in the box, and after marching all round the compound and frightening the public by pretended lunges with it at the faces in the little crowd, he threw the snake into the blanket. The boy, in the mean time, had picked up the others, and returned them to the box. When he had all in, the old charmer shut the box and sat on it, and panted. This interruption put an end to the snake-charming. I do not believe that the snakes had been tampered with, but our friend, who has a grip of iron, held the snake he had seized, so tight, and so close to its head, that it was powerless. He told us that it nearly got away, and was almost as bad to hold as an eel.

Our slave in the shawls having taken up his position in the same place as before, the boy held in his hand a common basket about two feet high and a foot across. The old man announced that he would cause a mango-tree to grow out of the sand. We had heard this trick much talked about, and watched it closely. The conjuror first scraped a little hole in the sand, and put in it, a mango-seed. When he had covered it up, he asked us for a little water. I went out and poured about half a gallon over it, wetting the sand all around. The old man then put the basket over the hole, and said he would have a tree in about twenty minutes. While we were waiting, he asked for three teacups, and said he would show some little child's play, as he called it, to while away the time. He put the three cups on the ground in front of him, the hole with the basket over it being on his right, the boy on his left, and no one else within at least four yards, except ourselves, and we sat in the verandah about six feet from him. He then asked us to mark a piece of chupattie. I marked a piece with the number of my regiment, and at his request put it upon his tongue. He closed his mouth, chewed, swallowed, then opened his mouth, which we examined, and it was apparently empty. He then asked which cup the piece of chupattie should be under. I whispered to a comrade, "Run and put your foot on the middle cup before the boy can get to it." I then answered, "The middle." My comrade immediately kicked that cup over, and there was nothing to be seen. We laughed at the old fellow, but he merely said, "Hai,—It is there!" and turning to his boy, said, "Scrape the sand." The boy went on his knees, and with his fingers scratched the sand till there appeared a piece of chupattie with one hundred and fifty-seven on it, and otherwise corresponding to the piece he had eaten.

The conjuror then took a piece of chupattie, and in our presence marked it with an Arabic character or two, and gave it to one of ourselves to eat. Then walking back, he sat down behind the cups facing us, and taking some sand in his hand, shook it over each cup, and said, "Where is it, my lord?" The one of us who had eaten it, thought it a sure joke to cry out in answer,

"Under all." But he quietly lifted up each cup, and under each lay a piece of chupattie exactly corresponding to the one our friend had eaten. This trick could not have been done with apparatus, as the cups were ours, and the ground was open road. It was pure sleight of hand. But now it was time to look for the mango-tree. We stood round when the old man lifted the basket, and there, from the centre of the wet patch, rose a green shoot about two inches high. We went down on our knees and examined it. We were told not to touch it, as it was delicate. But it was evidently to our eyes something growing. The old man then covered it up, and said, "In ten minutes the tree will be made."

We now asked after the two huge boas we had seen the boys dragging along, and they fetched them from under a piece of old sailcloth where they had been lying asleep. They were as large round as a man's thigh, and apparently about five feet long; but the charmer said they could stretch themselves to twelve or fifteen feet. He had had them since they were a few inches long, when he had found a nest of them. They were very tame and torpid. There were no tricks in them. We handled them, and stroked their skin. The old conjuror said the only thing they could do worth seeing, was to eat. He asked whether we had a goat or a sheep to give them, but we had none. A couple of dogs were brought in a sack; one a wretched looking pariah dog with a piece of cloth tied over his face; the other a big rough yellow fellow, wriggling and snapping like a fresh-caught pike. The moment the dog yapped, the boa who was to exhibit—one had been taken away, as, if fed in each other's presence, they are apt to fasten on each other—became lively and opened his eyes. A piece of string was fastened to the dog's hind leg, and the cloth being torn off his face, he made a rush away, but was brought up in a few yards by the string. He turned savagely round to bite at the string, and caught sight of the boa now approaching him with rapid wriggles. His jaw dropped, and he crouched down, casting his eyes about, and uttering a low snarl as the foam ran out of his mouth. We pitied the poor brute, and wanted them to let him go; but the charmer said that boa-sahib was rather a ticklish customer when his gastric juice was stimulated, until he had got a mouthful. The boa, now close to the dog, was twisting and writhing in every direction: at one time shooting himself out until he was a dozen feet long and hardly as thick as a man's arm: then shutting up into a mass three or four feet long and as thick round as a fat man. At last, raising half his body in the air, he brought it down with a whack on the unfortunate beast's back, the dog appearing by this time almost inanimate. It was thus killed, and in two or three minutes became a misshapen mass. The boa then covered the body with saliva, and, turning his head round, his tail still encircling the dog, he took the head into his mouth with one suck. At this moment, one of the boys

who had carried the animal ran up, and with a chopper cut off the four legs of the dog at the knees. We were told they were apt to disagree with the snake, and make him sulk. In fact, the fewer bones the boa eats, the better for him.

It was rather a sickening sight, and we urged them to let the other dog go. They did so, and the poor brute ran away at a great rate when they started him.

We left the boa to gorge his dog, which was slowly disappearing, and went back to the basket where the mango was growing, and on which some of us had been keeping our eyes all the time. The conjuror lifted it up, and there appeared a little mango-shoot; in fact, a young tree, about a foot high. We touched and pulled off several of the leaves and ate them. They had the peculiar scented taste of the mango. I wanted to pull it up and see whether it had any roots, but the old man would not consent to that on any terms. We wished to see more tricks, or I fear I should have pulled it up in spite of him. However, he sent for an old pot, carefully transplanted the mango, taking up a good ball of earth, and sent it away by one of his boys. He said it was to have it planted in some garden.

This is the most famous trick in Hindostan, and is done in all parts, I believe. The jugglers throughout Asia are all of one clan, and their sons become jugglers or musicians, their daughters dancing-girls, the secrets of the trade being handed down from father to son. Certainly the tree had every appearance of growing; it was bright and fresh-looking, and its leaves and stalks were stiff. There was none of that dragged appearance which hangs about anything just transplanted or stuck in the ground.

The old conjuror now said that, for his next trick, he must be somewhere out of the glare of the sun, and sheltered from any air which might be stirring. We accordingly adjourned to the verandah. The conjuror spread a piece of matting, and squatted, produced from his shawls a bag, and emptied it on the stone in front of him. The contents were a quantity of little bits of wood; some, forked liked branches of a tree; some, straight; each a few inches long; besides these, there were some fifteen or twenty little painted wooden birds, about half an inch long. The old man chose one of the straightest and thickest of the bits of wood, and, turning his face up in the air, poised it on the tip of his nose. The little boys who sat by him henceforth handed him whatever he called for. First, two or three more pieces of wood, which he poised on the piece already there, then a forked piece, to which he gradually made additions, until he had built upon his nose a tree with two branches. He always kept its balance by adding simultaneously on each side, holding a piece in each hand, and never once taking his eyes off the fabric. Soon the two branches became four, the four eight, and so on, until a skeleton of a tree was formed about two feet high, and branching out so as to overshadow his whole face; he could just reach with his hands to put the topmost branches on. It was a wonderful structure, and we

all held our breath as he added the last bits. But it was not done yet. The boys now handed him the little birds, and, still two at a time, one in each hand, he stuck them all over the tree. The complete immobility of his head and neck while he was balancing this structure on the tip of his nose, was something wonderful, and I think he must have breathed through his ears, for there was not the slightest perceptible motion about nose or mouth. After putting all the birds on, he paused, and we, thinking the trick was finished, began to applaud. But he held up his forefinger for silence. There was more to come. The boys put into one of his hands a short hollow reed, and into the other some dried peas. He then put a pea in his mouth, and using the reed as a pea-shooter, took aim and shot off the branch one of the birds. The breath he gave was so gentle and well calculated that it gave no perceptible movement to his face; it just sent the pea far enough to hit a particular bird with perfect aim, and knock it over. Not another thing on the tree moved. Another pea was fired in the same way, and another bird brought down, and so on until all the birds were bagged. The fire was then directed at the branches and limbs of the tree, and, beginning from the topmost, the whole of this astonishing structure was demolished piecemeal even more wonderfully than its manner of erection.

He now said he would like to show us his son, who had a wonderful skin inside and out: it being, he assured us, "leather." He then shouted out for him, calling some outlandish name; but his followers, who evidently knew whom he wanted, shouted "Leather-fellow!" In a few moments a yellow-skinned boy of about twelve or fourteen, appeared, dressed only with a bit of red calico round his loins. The old man asked whether we had any heavy weights, and we produced two bags of shot weighing about fourteen pounds each. He tied a piece of string to each of these, and a fish-hook at the other end of the string; then, telling the boy to go down on his hands and knees and put his head close to the ground, he put a fish-hook through the lobe of each ear, and the boy, slowly lifting his head, raised the shot-bags from the ground and moved along on his hands and knees. The ears did not bleed, but were drawn to a considerable length, and I expected to see the hooks tear out; but nothing happened. After he had crept some twenty yards, he returned, and the hooks were taken out of his ears. The next operation was more horrible to look at. The hooks were actually inserted in the upper eyelids, near the inner corner, and as the boy raised his head the eyelids were drawn half way down his cheeks. But he raised the bags by his eyelids, and moved along as before. A little of this sort of performance went a long way, and we soon cried, "Enough!"

He now announced that the boy would swallow a sword. We had heard stories about the sword-blade's pushing up into the hilt, and so forth. We examined the sword closely, therefore, when it was produced. It was a common two-edged

sword, about an inch broad and two feet long. The edges were very blunt, and the point was quite rounded. It was evidently kept for the purpose, but there was nothing false about the hilt. The boy first filled his mouth with melted ghee from a cup which one of our khitmutgars brought, and then stood bolt upright, with his face turned up, his mouth closed and full of ghee. The old man stood behind him, and inserted the point of the sword between his lips and teeth, and gradually pushed it down, until the hilt touched the teeth; the ghee had in the mean time run down his throat. We were now told to come and feel the sword in his stomach. We pressed our fingers just where the ribs separate in front, and there we could distinctly feel the end of the sword. As soon as we were satisfied, the sword was slowly drawn out, and, beyond a retch or two, the boy's inside did not seem to be upset by this skilful introduction of a thick probe through the gullet.

The old man now said he must bring the performances to a close, but before going would show us something more wonderful than anything we had seen yet.

"Sahibs," he said, "you saw me make the mango-tree grow out of the sand; in the same spot I will make this chokra," putting his hand on the head of the yellow leather-skinned boy, "disappear in the earth." We did not think it very likely that he could do this under our very noses without our detection of the trick. However, we arranged ourselves as before in the verandah, our servants and the old man's followers forming a semicircle in front of and facing us. In the centre of the semicircle, sat the old conjuror; in front of him, squatted the yellow-skinned boy. The conjuror now asked for a big basket, and one of our servants brought him an old hamper from the out-house. He took it up and placed it over the boy so as to cover him altogether. At the moment of his doing this, I remembered afterwards that several persons clustered up round him as if to watch closely what he did. The instant the basket was on, the old man said, "Does it press on you?" The peculiar shrill voice of the boy, which we had been hearing for the last half hour, answered from underneath, "Yes, it presses on my head." "Well, be quick and get into the earth," said the old man, "and don't keep the sahibs waiting." In about ten seconds the boy's voice said, "I can't get down, there is a stone in my way." "Nonsense," said the old man; "if you are not gone in two minutes, I'll flog you." The conversation went on for some minutes, the boy whining, and the old man scolding and getting angry. At last we said, "Oh, let the little brute out; you can't do the trick while we are watching, and we never thought you would."

This only made the old conjuror more angry. He began to curse and swear in Mahrattee frightfully, declaring he had never before failed in a trick. We laughed at him until he worked himself into a rage that was hideous to see. He tore his puggere off, threw his arms about, and, all of

a sudden, before we knew what he was going to do, he seized a spear from one of his followers and plunged it into the basket. A hideous scream came from underneath, and blood flowed out upon the sand. Then, seizing the spear, he jobbed it repeatedly through the basket, shrieks following every stroke. Blood flowed like water. We were astounded, for we did not know whether this was a trick or not. We called on our servants to seize the old fellow, but they seemed to be frightened, and at last two of us, jumping out of the verandah, rushed towards the scene of murder. The diabolical old man was so intent on jobbing in the spear, that he paid no attention to our coming. My comrade seized him by the throat. I rushed to the basket and picked it up. There was nothing under it. Only the ground was covered with blood. Our servants crowded round, and the old conjuror, as soon as he could get his throat from my friend's grip, said, "There, sahibs! I was determined to send that fellow into the earth, and as he wouldn't go quietly, I had to force him." We looked round in amazement. "But where's the boy?" we asked. "Down there," said the old man, pointing to the ground; "but he'll be back soon." Suddenly we heard the boy's peculiar shrill voice in the distance, calling out, "Here I am, sahibs!" Everybody turned their heads in the direction, and there, running in at the gate of the compound, was the yellow-skinned boy.

A present of ten rupees sent away the old conjuror and his party, delighted. How many rupees would that old man and his yellow-skinned boy bag, if they came to London and made an affidavit of communion with spirits, or that they didn't themselves know how they did what they did?

MARY ANNING, THE FOSSIL FINDER.

EVERY one must have seen at least an engraving of that strange old-world monster the Plesiosaurus, of which Cuvier said, when the skeleton was sent to him from Lyme Regis, "Verily, this is altogether the most monstrous animal that has yet been found amid the ruins of a former world. It had a lizard's head, a crocodile's teeth, a trunk and tail like an ordinary quadruped, a chameleon's ribs, a whale's paddles, whilst its neck was of enormous length, like a serpent tacked on to the body." This "liassic, first cousin of all lizards," was discovered by a self-taught geologist, the daughter of a Lyme carpenter.

Things in this world pretty much repeat themselves. Women's pursuits follow this law. In Lady Jane Grey's time, hard study was fashionable. Mary Hutchinson and the Duchess of Newcastle are representatives of a race who were something far more than mere students. Then came a frivolous age, and then, by-and-by, science got to be popular; the ladies' pocket-books and annuals of some forty or fifty years ago almost invariably contain a few algebraic equations, besides arithmetical problems like those which Longfellow's Kavanagh sets his wife, and

some chemical experiments to boot. This age produced the class of whom Mrs. Somerville is the type. We have now got round again to the frivolous epoch; it will be the men's fault if it lasts long, for women have consciences, and feel that what their sons are to be depends mainly on them; besides, their minds are naturally more active than those of the "lords of creation," and if they now and then taboo everything intellectual, it is because they find such conduct pleases. Geology does not seem a pursuit likely to attract women, yet we have known several who had picked up a very fair knowledge of its outlines—some of them literally like Horace's slave who had mastered the Stoic philosophy while acting as pew-opener in Stertinius's lecture-hall. There was a quaint old lady who used to go her "midland circuit," calling on all parsons and other supposed encouragers of science, carrying about with her boxes of "specimens," and begging to be allowed to enlighten the national school children at so much a head. Then there is Miss Wetherall, at Amesbury, quite worth a visit, her "museum" being a collection of flints of the oddest shapes, twisted like snakes, knotted like ropes, branching like coral, and her talk being about Stonehenge and the universal pre-diluvian serpent-worship, of which she believes it a remnant, and of noting the zealous affection with which she points out tracings of Karnac, and snake temples in India and America, drawn by her father, the ex-cicerone of the neighbourhood.

But Mary Anning was something more than a mere village celebrity, interesting to those who like to study character, and are fond of seeing good stubborn English perseverance make way even where there is nothing in its favour. She acquired, if not an English, certainly an European, reputation. Professor Owen thought so highly of her usefulness, that he moved the authorities of the British Museum to grant her a pension of forty pounds a year, which she enjoyed for some little time before her early death.

Her father used to employ the church holidays in picking up along the beach pretty pebbles and shells, fossil and recent, and "verterberries," and "John Dory's bones," and "ladies' fingers," and other "curies," as they were called. Lyme and its neighbour, Charmouth, were then on the old coach-road, and the passengers mostly liked to take away a specimen or two, which they got either from Anning or from a Charmouth "fossiler," called the Cury-man, or "Captain Cury," from his trade in curiosities. In August, 1800, little Mary Anning was taken to see some horse-riding in the Rack field. A thunderstorm came on: those in charge of her hurried her under a tree; a flash of lightning struck the party, killing two women on the spot, and making the child insensible. A warm bath restored her to consciousness, and, strangely enough, she who had been a very dull girl before, now grew up lively and intelligent. She soon got to accompany her father in his rambles. "Fossiling," however, does not appear to have paid so well as

steady carpentry, for the family went down the hill. The father died of consumption, and Mary, at ten years of age, was left very badly off. Just then a lady gave her half-a-crown for a very choice ammonite. This encouraged her to take to collecting as a regular means of life. But she soon proved something more than a mere "fossiler." Gradually that truth dawned on her mind which our Laureate has so beautifully expressed:

There rolls the deep where grew the tree;
O earth, what changes thou hast seen!
There, where the long street roars, hath been
The silence of the central sea.

In 1811, she saw some bones sticking out of a cliff; and, hammer in hand, she traced the position of the whole creature, and then hired men to dig out for her the lias block in which it was embedded. Thus was brought to light the first Ichthyosaurus (fish-lizard), a monster some thirty feet long, with jaws nearly a fathom in length, and huge saucer eyes, some of which have been found so perfect, that the petrified lenses (the sclerotica, of which it had thirteen coats) have been split off and used as magnifiers. People then called it a crocodile. Mr. Henley, the lord of the manor, bought it of the enterprising young girl for twenty-three pounds. It is now in the British Museum. Sir Everard Home, writing in 1814, supported the crocodile theory; by-and-by, when more perfect paddles had been discovered, he said it must be a fish. Dr. Buckland (father of our lively young salmon-hatcher) pronounced its breast-bone to be that of a lizard; Dr. Ure hit upon the happy name ichthyosaurus; Conybeare, and De la Beche, and others, had a turn at it; and at last all their drawings, specimens, and a great many fresh details which Miss Anning had since brought to light, were sent over to Cuvier; and, after a ten years' siege, the Protean monster surrendered, and took the form under which he is at present known. Then came the Plesiosaurus, which was the occasion of a sharper, though shorter, battle. Miss Anning's business, of course, was not to take sides, but to furnish the combatants with munitions of war—now a paddle, then a jaw, then a stomach full of half digested fish. She had in a high degree that sort of intuition without which it is hopeless for any one to think of becoming a good collector of fossils.

Here, as in everything else, field and chamber practice are widely different: you may be well up in the latest theories, and able to argue perfectly on the specimen when it is laid before you, and yet you may totally lack that instinct which will lead your brother-collector right to the place where the "specimen" is to be found, and will direct him in following up the track, till from finding a fragment of a claw he succeeds in ferreting out the whole skeleton. Our heroine would have been able, for instance, out of fifty "nodules," all looking to you much of a muchness, to pick without hesitation the one which, being cleft with a dexterous blow, should

show a perfect fish imbedded in what was once soft clay. Scenting out valuable specimens in this way, she enabled the savans to fix four kinds of ichthyosauri, besides two plesiosaurs, and the extraordinary pterodactyle (discovered in 1828) which made Cuvier retract what he had said of the lizard's cousin, and award the palm of strangeness to a monster half vampire, half woodcock, with crocodile's teeth along its tapering bill, and scale armour over its lizard-shaped body. If you have never seen the creature delineated, take Dr. Buckland's wonderful plate, *Duria antiquior*, wherein "the dragons of the prime, which tare each other in the slime," are shown, swimming, flying, biting, fighting, "as 'twas their nature to;" and aloft in the corner of the picture, those things that look like Japanese kites, are nature's first attempts at anything in the bird line. Grewsome beasts they seem to be. Even if the pre-Adamite man is ever proved to have been existing at that epoch, we cannot imagine his wife making pets of them, or his children liking to have them hung about the house in cages, they have such a family likeness to the evil spirits who beset *Eneas* or *Satan* in an old illustrated *Virgil* or *Paradise Lost*.

One more discovery Miss Anning helped to bring about: the ladies' fingers were at last judged from their surroundings to be the bony processes of pre-chaotic cuttle-fish,—belemnites they are now named, because they are long and dart-like, instead of flat like our present cuttle-fish's inside. Some of them are so perfect that the ink-bag has been found and "utilised." Dr. Buckland, in his amusing Oxford lectures, used to show drawings in sepia the colouring matter used in making which was countless thousands of years old. Of this lias itself, in which all these creatures are discovered, we must say a word: it is largely exported, especially to Holland, for lias-lime has the property of hardening under water, and so is invaluable in forming the dykes, whereby, with facings of immense blocks of Finland granite, the Dutchmen try to keep the sea out of their polders, or low-level meadows. Everybody knows that our geological strata, of which we can show a greater variety in this little island than much larger countries possess, do not run parallel with any of the coasts, but transversely from north-east to south-west. The chalk goes from Norfolk across to the Isle of Wight, with the Wealden and London clay and other beds laid upon it; the oolite from the North Riding, down through Oxfordshire and westward to Bath, and so on of the rest. Then again the bands are not continuous and unbroken. Often one bed is washed away (denuded) along more than half its original course. This is especially the case with the lias. It is found at Lyme, it "crops out" again in a few other places, but is not largely represented anywhere else except in Leicestershire, where, at Barrow-on-Soar, fish and reptiles identical with those at Lyme might, till lately, have been bought for a fifth of the price which the Duke of Buckingham (who gave one hundred and

twenty pounds for a very indifferent ichthyosaur) and other amateurs have made fashionable at Lyme. Alas! O intending speculator, the Barrow men have now learnt how to charge.

But to return to Miss Anning. Dr. Carus, who went with the King of Saxony through England and Scotland, in 1844, and wrote an account of his majesty's journey, speaks of visiting her collection, and securing six feet of reptile for fifteen pounds. The doctor says: "Wishing to preserve the name of this devoted servant of science, I made her write it in my pocket-book; she said, with unaffected pride, as she gave me back the book, 'My name is well known throughout Europe.'" Better known indeed abroad than at home! In her own neighbourhood, Miss Anning was far from being a prophetess. Those who had derided her when she began her researches, now turned and laughed at her as an uneducated assuming person, who had made one good chance hit. Dr. Buckland and Professor Owen and others knew her worth, and valued her accordingly; but she met with little sympathy in her own town, and the highest tribute which that magniloquent guide-book, *The Beauties of Lyme Regis*, can offer her, is to assure us that "her death was, in a pecuniary point, a great loss to the place, as her presence attracted a large number of distinguished visitors." Quick returns are the thing at Lyme. We need not wonder that Miss Anning was chiefly valued as a bait for tourists, when we find that the museum is now entirely broken up, and the specimens returned to those who had lent them. No one had public spirit enough to take charge of a non-paying concern, when the early geological furor had calmed down, and people came to bathe and not to chop rocks. You may now visit the old abode of saurians without being able to see a single tolerable specimen.

Miss Anning wrote sadly enough to a young girl in London: "I beg your pardon for distrusting your friendship. The world has used me so unkindly, I fear it has made me suspicious of every one."

All this time she was dying of a malignant tumour in the breast—Her flying to strong drinks and opium to ease the pain of this, her detracting townspeople do not fail to record to her discredit. She died in 1847, and the Geological Society, in concert with the vicar of the place, have lately put up a little memorial window to her in the church—"a poor little thing, sir; one of those kaleidoscope windows, you know," said one of the "faint praisers," who, having neglected her in life, seem to think it quite proper to decry all her belongings now she is gone.

Grateful or ungrateful, the Lyme people live in a pretty country. It is a fine bracing walk over the hills from Bridport, itself a quaint place—just a knot of houses by the beach, and all the rest of the town a mile and more inland—so inland, that you don't see the sea from any part of it. Near Bridport ends the Chesil Bank, that strange pebble beach which runs along from Portland, joining the "island" to the

mainland. The pebbles grow gradually smaller as you move westward. At Portland they are as big as respectable potatoes. West of Bridport they are small peas; you think it is a sand-bank till you put your hand down and feel. So regular is this decrease, that they say smugglers, running ashore on blind nights, tell their whereabouts by picking up a handful of gravel.

The road to Lyme is very hilly. Even we, who live in the hilliest part of Somersetshire, groaned at the ups and downs; but what drivers these people are: how glad we were to be afoot, despite the fatigue. After our Zomerzet fashion of locking the wheel at every gentle slope, to see these Dorset men swing along down the hills without either drag or skidpan, was a "caution." Is it that the men are bolder or the horses better trained? About the Peak, in Derbyshire, they do the same thing; but in the Saxon's Paradise, the pleasant country, the "Somer-sæt," we always make as much fuss about a hill as a London 'bus does in going down by St. Sepulchre's church. Lyme has a history of its own. It was great in Edward the Third's reign, when *the Cobb*, the artificial harbour, was first built; and the Feast of Cobb Ale was founded. The "ale," in the good old times, was the equivalent of a public dinner now-a-days—generally for some good object; and this "Cobb ale" flourished till the Puritans "put it down," along with stage plays and other unseemly sports. Lyme fitted out two good ships for the Armada. It was defended by Blake against Prince Maurice. The defence of Lyme and that of Taunton are enough to immortalise our great republican admiral, even without his deeds of prowess by sea. As is too often the case, the besieged sullied their cause by sad cruelty in the day of triumph. After the royalists had gone off, they sallied out to pillage, and finding a poor old Irishwoman of the enemy, drove her through the streets to the sea-side, knocked her on the head, slashed and hewed her body with their swords, and, having robbed her, cast her carcase into the sea, where it lay till consumed. The admiral's secretary says explicitly that the women of the town slew and pulled her in pieces. Whitelock writes much to the same effect. Some tell of a hogshead stuck with nails having been prepared, into which the old woman was put, and so rolled into the sea. Such is civil war. Another sad episode in the history of Lyme is the attempt of the Duke of Monmouth—the coward who skulked away from Sedgemoor while the poor Somersetshire rustics, whom he had deluded, charged and charged again, with scythes and billhooks, Kirke's "lambs" and Feversham's dragoons. Daniel Defoe was among Monmouth's men. The brothers Hewling, of Lyme, were among the most pitied victims of the "Bloody Assize."

But, amidst all the interest attaching to the quiet little "fashionable" watering place, not the least is that which centres round the name of Mary Anning. Her history shows what humble people may do, if they have just purpose and courage enough, towards promoting the

cause of science. The inscription under her memorial window commemorates "her usefulness in furthering the science of geology" (it was not a *science* when she began to discover, and so helped to make it one), "and also her benevolence of heart and integrity of life." The carpenter's daughter has won a name for herself, and has deserved to win it.

WILI AND WILINIK.

WHEN M. Théophile Gautier's charming ballet *Giselle* was in full vogue, we were all very familiar with certain Slavonic spirits called "Wilis," and were taught to believe that they were the ghosts of young ladies crossed in love, who had found in the tomb not an anodyne, but a stimulus to the ill humour natural under the circumstances, and displayed their hatred of the world in general by tearing to pieces every mortal man who came within their reach.

All this was very well in its day, but of late years we have become acquainted with sundry Servian legends, which make us suspect that in the days when we saw Carlotta Grisi, a village maiden in the first act, a "Wili" in the second act of the ballet, we were tolerably dark on the subject of Slavonic superstition. It is possible that some peculiarly cross-grained damsels may be changed after death into peculiarly mischievous ghosts; but even if this is the case (which we gravely doubt), we are perfectly certain that, as a general rule, the Wili does not require pre-existence in a human form. We have the authority of Jacob Grimm for the assertion that she is to the Servians what the "Woman of the Wood" is to the Germans. She is so far like the Wili of the ballet, that she dwells in rocky places, particularly affecting the vicinity of water, wears a white fluttering garment, always has her hair in picturesque disorder, and is invariably handsome. On the other hand, she is so far more amiable than her theatrical descendants, that she never does harm to any one without provocation, though it should be observed that if she *is* offended she can become malignant to the highest degree, sometimes piercing her victim's heart and getting rid of him at once, sometimes inflicting on his hands and feet incurable wounds, which cause him to die a lingering death. Indeed, if all tales be true, she has been heard to sing:

A child am I of earth,
The mountain gave me birth;
My swaddling-clothes were the leaves so green,
And mother's milk the dew has been;
My cradle was rocked by the kindly breeze,
As it play'd among the forest trees.

Very kind-hearted Wilis have been known to heal the wounds they have inflicted, and the result of the operation is a singular being called a "Wilinik." The Wilinik is an ordinary mortal, who, having been wounded and healed by a Wili, receives from her a root, the possession of which guards him against all deceit,

and secures him a progeny of brave sons and lovely daughters. Assuredly the root does not enjoy a sinecure.

Having thus settled what a Wili is, let us look out for a Servian tale or two, in which she plays a part. It will be observed that she is never a principal figure, but always remains somewhat in the background.

There was a certain king who had two sons, one just, the other unjust. When he died, the unjust son said to his brother, "We cannot agree, so take the horse and these three hundred pieces of gold, making together your share in our paternal inheritance, and likewise take yourself off." Whether this particular act was unjust or not we cannot say, as we have not had an opportunity of looking over the deceased monarch's accounts; but we suspect all was not quite fair and aboveboard, inasmuch as the unjust brother avowedly chose "Honesty is the worst policy" as the ruling maxim of his life. Knaves in general strive to conceal their idiosyncrasies, but there was no hypocrisy in our unjust man of Servia. He coolly and even ostentatiously said, "I am a rogue, not from any natural weakness, but because it is my deliberate conviction that roguery is superior to its opposite."

The righteous brother, whom, for brevity's sake, we will call "Justus," had not proceeded far, when he accidentally encountered the unrighteous one, whom we will call "Injustus," and who saluted him with one of his usual panegyrics of dishonesty. "Well," said Justus, "I'll bet you a hundred gold pieces that, in spite of your oft-repeated and somewhat wearisome assertions, honesty is the best policy after all." "Done," said the other; and they then agreed to abide by the decision of the first person they met. As it turned out, a more partial arbiter could not have been selected, for the first person they met was the Evil One himself, disguised as a monk, and he, of course, was strongly of opinion that wrong is far better than right. Two other similar wagers, similarly decided, consumed the rest of poor Justus's little fortune, and his horse went with it; but so firm was his conviction of the superiority of virtue, that he now offered to stake his eyes on the soundness of his views. Emboldened by his previous successes, Injustus, without further ado, or seeking any further arbiter, cut out both Justus's eyes, and then appealed to Justus himself, whether the very fact of his blindness did not of itself prove the worthlessness of right. The martyr to justice still affirmed, without intending a pun, that "he did not see it," and instructed his victorious brother to give him a vessel of water wherewith to moisten his lips and wash his wounds, and to place him under a fir-tree that grew by a certain spring. Injustus, who, after all, was not without his good points, granted this very modest request, and poor Justus, as in the night-time he sat alone by the spring, heard the Wilis come to bathe in the waters, and then heard one of them say:

She's very ill, is the king's poor daughter,
To such a pass has her malady brought her;
But if she could only bathe in this water,
She'd get very well,

As I can tell,
And all who are deaf, or dumb, or blind,
In these same waters a cure may find.

The cock crew, the Wilis vanished, and Justus, creeping on all fours to the spring and washing his eyes with the waters, found that the last of the Wili's assertions was, at least, correct, for he saw as well as ever. Nor did he fail to make good use of his sight; he replenished his vessel from the magic stream, and, taking it to the daughter of the king referred to by the Wili, restored her to a condition of robust health. That the princess was given to him for a wife, with half the kingdom for her dowry, followed as a matter of course.

Though news did not travel fast in those days, the great prosperity of Justus became known, in course of time, to his iniquitous brother, who at once shrewdly inferred that it must be a very fine thing to lose one's sight and sit under the fir-tree. So he cut out his own eyes, took the station formerly occupied by his brother, and presently, like him, heard the Wilis come to bathe:

There's no doubt
At all about
This fact, that some one overheard
What I of these fine waters said,
How they would heal the royal maid—
Yes, ev'ry word.
We'll look around us, for I vow
I think there's some one list'n'ing now,

cried the Wili, whose information had proved so useful to Justus. And the search, which immediately began, terminated in the capture of the hapless listener, who was no sooner caught than he was torn into four pieces.

Once upon a time a certain man had a dream. He thought that a child, white as snow and with wings on its shoulders, stood before him and said: "Climb up the highest mountain of which thou hast knowledge, and thou wilt find on the summit thereof a lofty fir-tree. Beneath this thou wilt perceive a jagged rock, out of which water is running like tears. Dig beneath the rock as many feet as it is high, and thou wilt come to a round vessel with a golden cover, filled with coins. When thou hast removed the cover, cast it down and leave it, but the coins thou may'st bear away. Still, mind that thou tellest no one of what thou hast done, or evil may befall thee."

This was pleasant, and apparently profitable, information, and the man had no sooner received it, than he proceeded to a spot that answered to the child's description, and began to dig with all his might and main. When, however, he had struck the third blow with his pickaxe, he heard a voice as of a child, which seemed to proceed from beneath the ground, and imperatively commanded him to desist. So much was he touched, that he at once fell

down and sank into a deep sleep, during which he saw again the child of his dream, who said, in a stern voice: "Why didst thou commence thy labour without crossing thyself as a pious Christian? Had I not been by, a grievous ill would have befallen thee. Therefore, now, when thou arisest, cross thyself as is meet, and resume thy work in a good spirit."

Strange to say, when the man awoke, he found himself not on the spot where sleep had overtaken him, but in a sunny garden, full of the most beautiful flowers. Nevertheless, he resumed his digging, having first crossed himself, in compliance with the child's command. While he was shovelling up the earth, a light as of sunbeams flashed into his eyes, and he perceived a dragon asleep on the vessel that contained the treasure. Thrice did he entreat the monster to depart, but the dragon, waking at the third summons, flatly refused to stir. "The treasure," quoth he, "is neither thine nor mine; but if thou wilt tell me how many streams spring from this rock, I will leave the place, and thou mayest then do as thou wilt."

The required enumeration proved no easy job, and the man, after going from spring to spring, became so weary and perplexed, that he leant against a tall tree, out of pure exhaustion. While he was thus reposing, he heard a rustling overhead, and, looking upwards, saw a Wili and a Wilinik engaged in hot debate. The Wilinik wanted to know something, which the Wili, who was manifestly uneasy, was loth to communicate, and at last the latter cried out: "As sure as there are seventy and seven springs in this mountain, I know nothing about it." So saying, the Wili flew away, but the Wilinik perceiving the man, told him he might now take the treasure without impediment; which, noticing that the dragon had fled, the man did.

The Wili once manifested a remarkable creative talent. On a broiling summer's day they fashioned a young damsel out of some snow which they found at the bottom of a bottomless pit, and no sooner was their work accomplished than the figure was animated by the wind, nurtured by the dew, clothed with leaves by the wood, and decked with the choicest flowers by the meadow.

This wonderful girl, who will remind some readers of the antique Atalanta, issued a proclamation declaring that she would become the bride of the first youth who could catch her in a horse-race. The first gentlemen in the world, including the emperor's son, eagerly responded to the summons; and when they were all on the race-course, ready to start, the damsel took her place in the midst of them, not on horseback, but standing on her feet, and thus spoke: "Yonder, against the winning-post, I have set up a golden apple. The first who takes it shall be my husband, but if I reach it before any of you, a sudden death will at once come upon you all. Think, therefore, what you are about."

The aspirants did think, and they thought

it very unlikely that a girl on foot would prove an overmatch for men on horseback, for they were not aware that the snow-maiden had little wings under her shoulders. But they soon found that their thoughts had been too hasty, for when they were about half way on the course, they saw their fair antagonist gaining ahead. Still they did not lose courage, but, clapping spurs to their steeds, overtook the girl, who at once pulled a hair from her head and flung it to the ground. A forest immediately sprang up, in which the riders were lost, but by dint of perseverance they overcame even that difficulty, and making their way through the trees, were again on the track of the nimble maiden, who shed a tear, which immediately expanded into a foaming torrent, and drowned the whole party, with the single exception of the emperor's son, whose horse swam upon the water. Perceiving that the snow-maiden was again far ahead, he thrice implored her, in the name of the Deity, to proceed no further. She stood still accordingly, and placing her on his horse, he swam with her to dry land, and proceeded with her homeward through a mountainous district. When, however, he had reached the highest summit, she was gone.

An ambitious youth once made the singular vow that he would wed no one but a maiden of imperial race, and as, with all his visionary propensities, he was of a thoroughly practical disposition, he went boldly up to the emperor and asked the hand of his daughter in marriage. Now, the emperor, as it happened, was of a somewhat timid temperament, and though an emphatic "No" was on the tip of his tongue, he preferred to utter his refusal in a more circumlocutionary manner. He therefore said:

"I shall only be too happy to give you my daughter, if—if—"

"Yes?" asked the youth.

"If in the course of, say, a week, you will procure me,—first, a white horse without speck that has never known bridle."

"Secondly?" inquired the youth.

"Secondly, a sorrel horse with a black head that has never been mounted. Thirdly, a black horse with a white head and white feet that has never been shod."

"Well," said the youth, "horses are to be got, though a week is rather a short time."

"Stop, I have not finished," proceeded the emperor. "Besides the three horses, you must bring as much gold as they all three can carry, as a present to my empress. On these conditions, and no other, I grant you my daughter's hand."

The youth, having thanked the emperor much more heartily than he deserved, took his leave in no very cheerful mood; but fortunately the imperial maiden had overheard all the conversation, and had, moreover, seen the petitioner, who appeared to her the handsomest man in the world. Therefore he was soon comforted by a letter, which the young lady sent him by the hands of a confidential servant, and which

commanded him to come to her secretly on the following morning, if he desired a successful issue to his suit.

While the youth remained awake through the night, reflecting on his good fortune, the maiden, likewise awake, occupied herself in stealing from her father a magic knife, which she gave to her adorer when he came according to appointment, and they both vowed eternal love and fidelity. She then directed him to take a horse which belonged to her, and to ride with all speed to the Wili's wood, where he would find a certain triplicit hill, and after that a meadow bright with pearls, with horses of the most various colours grazing upon it. From these horses he was to choose three of the desired colours, and if they proved restive and unwilling to be caught, he was to draw out the knife so that the sun might shine upon it, and thus light up all the meadow: when all the animals would come to him of their own accord. The horses secured, he was to proceed to the middle of the meadow, where he would find a cypress-tree, with a root of brass, boughs of silver, and leaves of gold. From the root, cut with the magic knife, a torrent of gold coin would issue, which would fully enable him to comply with the emperor's terms.

These minute directions were strictly followed, and the success of the adventurer was complete. Nay, so greatly was the king struck with admiration when he saw the horses arrive laden with the golden treasure, that he could not help asking the suitor what he required in the shape of dowry? "Give me the princess herself *and* the knife," said the gallant youth, "and I will ask no more." So the princess and the knife were given, and all parties were satisfied.

THE HUNGARIAN DERVISH.

MR. ARMINIUS VÁMBÉRY is a young Hungarian, studious of men's tongues, and versed in divers languages of Europe and Asia. Impelled by scientific thirst for search into certain Asiatic relationships of the language of Hungary, he went eastward, lived for some years among the Turks at Constantinople—familiar in their houses, studious in their schools and libraries—until he could transform himself into a very good facsimile of a Turkish Efendi, barring the more European aspect of his countenance. Then he said to his soul that he would rise up and go into the wild innermost parts of Central Asia, and would there study races of men, who, if they had the faintest idea who he was, and what he was about, and perhaps also if they hadn't any such idea, were likely to kill or enslave him. He went and saw and did come back alive, after a perilous expedition, accomplished with much control over the quick course of blood at the age of one-and-thirty, in the sedate character of a holy dervish. Having worked his way round, often over paths untrodden by any European traveller, from Samarcand to Herat,

from Herat he came to London, where he has been triumphantly received by the Geographical Society, and by society in general. Now, he has told his adventures, Hungarian as he is, in an English book of Travels in Central Asia. Some day he will tell the philological world what he has learnt from the tongues of Turkestan. That will be for the few. But all the world, in England at any rate, understands and appreciates courage shown in the carrying out of whatever good design a man has really at heart, and has ears for a tale of the successful achievement of an honest purpose, under rare conditions of life, in the face of danger.

At Teheran, Mr. Vámbéry was hospitably entertained by Haydar Efendi, representative of the Sublime Porte at the court of Persia. It is an old custom of the Turkish embassy in Teheran to accord a small subsidy to the mendicant hadjis and dervishes who pass every year through Persia in considerable numbers, receiving nothing from the Persians. This brought to the embassy, ragged Tartars from the remotest parts of Turkestan; and Mr. Vámbéry, who went by the name of Reshid Efendi, took so much pleasure, on behalf of his own studies, in exciting these people to friendly conversation, that he became known among them as a man treating the dervishes as brethren, and probably himself a dervish in disguise. Thus it came to pass that the hadjis and dervishes were apt to send through Reshid Efendi their petitions to the Turkish minister, and one day, on the twentieth of March, in the year 'sixty-three, four hadjis visited him with a request that he would introduce them to the minister, in order that they might complain of an unlawful exaction of tribute suffered by them at the hands of the Persians. "We desire," they said, "no money from his excellency; we pray only that for the future our brethren may go unmolested to the Holy Places." Their spokesman was Hadji Bilal (a hadji means one who has made the pilgrimage to Mecca), from Little Bokhara, or Chinese Tartary, where, ragged as was his pilgrim's dress, he was Court Imam of the Vang, or Chinese governor, of the province of Aksu. He was twice a hadji, for he had twice visited the Holy Sepulchre. He was the chief man in the caravan, which consisted, he said, of twenty-four persons, "young and old, rich and poor, men of piety, learned men and laity; still we live together with the greatest simplicity, since we are all from Khokand and Kashgar, and have among us no Bokharist, no viper of that race." There was a faithful simplicity of manner in the four ragged pilgrims, who were about to return through Central Asia to their homes, which caused Mr. Vámbéry to resolve to cast in his lot with them. But no Oriental would believe an Efendi capable of taking a dangerous and tedious journey for no better motive than a thirst for knowledge. Mr. Vámbéry, therefore, told the Tartars that he had long silently, but earnestly, desired to visit Turkestan; not merely to see the only source of Islamite virtue that still remained undefiled,

but to behold the saints of Khiva, Bokhara, and Samarcand. He had now been waiting a year in Persia, and he thanked God for having at last granted him fellow-travellers such as they were, with whom he might proceed on his way, and accomplish his purpose.

The Tartars were amazed at the proposal, and were more sure than ever that he who could make it was really a dervish; but they honestly warned "Reshid Efendi" of the perils of the way. Mr. Vámbéry persisted, and was accepted as a fellow-traveller by the chiefs of the dervish caravan. His friends at the embassy said he had trusted himself to men who would kill him or sell him for the smallest coin, but as he believed otherwise, and was resolved to go, the Turkish envoy received the hadjis, spoke of Reshid Efendi's designs in terms corroborative of his own representations, recommended him to the hospitality of his new fellow-travellers, and promised them that they might look for a return for any service done to an Efendi, a servant of the Sultan, who is the acknowledged chief of true believers. Then he asked for a list of the persons in the caravan, and made to it, on the part of the embassy, a handsome donation of fifteen ducats.

Hadji Bilal had two adopted sons with him, who were too heavy a burden on his resources; one of them was quartered on the new traveller as "famulus," to make the bread, and brew the tea, and help to dispose of them when they were ready. Mr. Vámbéry made up his mind to put complete faith in the good intentions of this hadji, showed him what money he was taking for the expense of the journey, and was instructed by him to avoid all character for wealth, shave his head, wear a poor costume of Bokhara, and dispense with as much as possible—say, bed-clothes, linen, and so forth—in preparing his small outfit. Then he was taken to the caravanserai where his two dozen fellow-travellers were lodged, fourteen in one little cell, ten in another, all filthy and ragged, many with nothing but the beggars' staff to help them on their journey. He disturbed their attentions to their vermin, was received by them hospitably, had to drink with them a large Bokhariot bowl of green tea without sugar or milk, to break bread with each individually, and embrace him. Then they all sat in a circle to discuss what route they were to choose.

So, on the morning of the twenty-eighth of March, the start was made from the caravanserai in Teheran. Those of the pilgrims who could afford it had hired a mule or an ass to the Persian frontier; the others, with their date-wood staves in their hands, were eager for the signal of departure. The wretched clothing they had worn in Teheran was holiday costume; each now wore his real travelling dress of a thousand rags fastened round the loins by a cord. All were assembled. Hadji Bilal raised his hand for the parting benediction, and hardly had every one seized his beard to say "Amen," when the pedestrians rushed out of the gate and strode away to get the start of those who were mounted.

On they went, chanting hymns and reciting verses from the Koran. There was Hadji Bilal with his two adopted sons, aged five-and-twenty and sixteen; there was Hadji Yusaf, a Chinese Tartar peasant, who had with him a ten-year-old nephew and eighty ducats, but his wealth was a secret, and he hired only one horse, on which he and his boy rode in turn; there was Hadji Amed, a poor mollah, who had only his staff to depend on; and there was the equally poor Hadji Hasan, who had lost his father on the journey, and was going home an orphan. Another poor hadji had lost both father and brother on the journey. There was also Hadji Yakoub, professional beggar; and Hadji Kurban, who, as a knife-grinder, had traversed the whole of Asia, had seen not only Constantinople and Mecca, but also Thibet and Calcutta, and had twice crossed the Kirghish Steppes to Orenburg and Taganrok. Other of the hadjis were, a Chinese soldier; a commission merchant: one who, whenever he had shouted Allah two thousand times, fell into a state of ecstatic blessedness called by the unbelievers epilepsy; a youth of fourteen, suffering heavily all the way from feet which had been badly frozen in the snow of Hamadan; and Hadji Sheikh Sultan Mahmoud from Kashgar, an enthusiastic young Tartar of the family of a renowned saint of his native place, who had visited at Mecca the tomb not only of the prophet, but of his own father: a poet who had yearned towards Mecca and had died there.

On the fourth day, the caravan reached Firzakah, at the foot of a mountain crowned by an ancient fortification. There begins the province Mazendran. Next day, after three or four hours' journey, they reached the mouth of the great defile properly called Mazendran, luxuriant with the magnificent green of primeval forests. This defile leads to the shores of the Caspian; where it ends, on the northern side, immense woods mark the limits of the Caspian shore. Here, at the night-halt in a forest of box-wood, two tigers were disturbed at the spring by the young people who went to fetch water. As for the jackals, they were so numerous and fearless, that, all night long, men had to defend with their hands and feet, their shoes and their bread-sacks. From Sari, the capital of Mazendran, horses were hired for the day's journey to the Caspian, over marshes and morasses that cannot be traversed on foot, and so, after two days' rest, the pilgrims advanced to Karatipe, by the water-side. Here Mr. Vámbéry was received with his friend Hadji Bilal in the house of an Afghan of distinction, who was himself hospitable enough; but he had in his household an Afghan scapegrace and opium-eater named Emir Mehmed, who had seen enough of Europeans to be sure that Dervish Vámbéry was neither Turk nor Asiatic. At first this man tried to entrap the disguised Hungarian savant into travel with himself through the great desert. He had travelled, he said, for the last fifteen years to and from Khiva, and perfectly knew the country. Dervish Vám-

béry replied sedately that all believers are brethren; thanked the man for his friendliness, but added that as a dervish he was very much attached to his travelling companions. This Afghan, joining the caravan, stuck to the false dervish, and lost no opportunity of betraying him; but his own scapegrace character, and the faithful support given by the hadjis to their fellow-traveller, foiled him on every occasion, when he might otherwise have brought upon his victim, death or slavery. Mr. Vámbéry, too, played his part so well, that he was reckoned with Hadji Bilal and a certain Hadji Salih to be one of the chiefs of the little company.

A bold young Turkoman offered to take all the holy men over the water to Gomushteppe for no other reward than their prayers. But when alone with Mr. Vámbéry he confided to him that he cherished unreturned affection for a girl of his own race, and that a Jew, who was a great magician, had promised to prepare a charm to win her love, if he would but procure, as one essential ingredient in it, thirty drops of attar of roses fresh from Mecca. "We know," he said, "that the hadjis bring back with them out of the holy city essence of roses and other sweet perfumes; and, as you are the youngest of their chiefs, I apply to you, and hope you will listen to my entreaty." Some of the hadjis had really brought attar of roses with them; and so the desire of the poor Turkoman boatman could be gratified, whereby he was made joyous as a child.

In a boat which was but a hollow tree the hadjis were stowed, each with his sack of flour, for carriage over the shallow water to the skiff lying a mile from land: a "keseboy" with a mast and a large and a small sail, that had brought in naphtha, pitch, and salt, and was now homeward bound with a cargo of corn. The vessel had no deck, and the pilgrims were packed like herrings along its sides. So they sped before a favouring wind by the tongue of land that converts this corner of the Caspian into the bay of Astrabad.

At the point of that tongue of land, is Ashourada, the most southerly point of the Russian possessions in Asia. Till the Russians came there, five-and-twenty years ago, Ashourada was a favourite station for the alaman cruisers of the Turkoman pirates, and there is nothing more glorious and delightful to the young Turkoman than a share in the alaman, or marauding expedition over the Turkish borders, in search of cattle or other plunder, and above all, of unhappy Persians who can be dragged off, and whose fate it then is to suffer torment in chains until an ample ransom is extorted, or, failing ransom, to be carried into the interior and sold for what they will fetch at the market-price of slaves. The Russians endeavoured to check with war-steamers the expeditions of these pirates, and their steamers, doing Persia no unfriendly service, have thus won them a settlement at Ashourada, and at Gez, the port of Astrabad, in the south-eastern corner of the Caspian Sea. The piratical Turkomans render it

unsafe for any merchantman to approach their coast without the escort of a steamer. The Russians require that every Turkoman vessel proceeding from its own coast to the shore of Persia on the south, shall have a pass from them, annually renewable, for which the owner pays eight, ten, or fifteen, ducats a year. This pass must be shown, and search is made for prisoners or contraband, every time the vessel sails by Ashourada. A Turkoman, who for thirty years has lived in a tent in the midst of the semi-European colony, taking forty ducats a month as a Russian admiral, is expected to use his influence with his clansmen in suppressing, and the knowledge he can obtain from native connexions in discovering and defeating, piratical attacks upon the Persians. But this worthy khan has transferred his allegiance to Russian brandy; he is always drunk; and his two sons, who were to be his successors, have come to an understanding with the robbers, and are careful never to betray their movements to the Russians. About half a league from Ashourada are several sea-marks, consisting of long painted poles, and the Turkomans told Mr. Vámbéry that these were set up by the "Inghiliz" to mark the limits of the Russian waters. The other side belonged to the Turkomans, whom the English would always protect from attack by the Russians. The Turkoman vessel carrying the pilgrims came to its journey's end about a mile and a half from the mouth of the river Gôrghen, unable to get nearer on account of the shallows, and the disembarkation was by twos and threes in rude native boats. On the shore was, on each side of the river, the Turkoman encampment of Gomushteppe, of which Khandjan the chief stood ready to greet heartily the chiefs of the holy pilgrim band, Vámbéry the dervish, and the Hadjis Bilal and Salih. The Turkomans of either sex and every age hurried to touch or embrace the hadjis, and hot dispute arose over the question of their quarters, every one being eager for the honour of showing them hospitality. Hadji Bilal and Mr. Vámbéry, otherwise the Dervish Reshid Efendi, were received by the chief Khandjan, who set up for them a guests' tent, whereof they took possession with the due formality of first walking twice round it, and peeping in at the four corners. Here they received visitors till late at night, and supped heartily on boiled fish and sour milk, served by Khandjan's son, a boy of twelve, who took the dishes from a Persian slave heavily fettered.

Throughout Turkestan, there are no dwellers within rooted walls. The tent of the Turkoman, which is met with in the same form throughout all Central Asia, and as far as the remote parts of China, is always alike in shape and construction—a circular hut no higher than its door, with a dome-shaped roof open at the centre to let smoke out and light in. It is built of felt over a wooden framework, and the making of the felt, with all the care of construction, putting up, taking down, and packing on the camel in case of removal, is the business of the Turkoman

woman. For newly-married couples, or for guests to whom it is desired to pay particular honour, a tent covered inside with felt of snowy whiteness is the proper lodging; the ordinary tent is that which has grown brown or black from age and smoke. These tents, says Mr. Vámbéry, are cool in summer, and warm in winter, and under them the Turkomans sleep undisturbed, however fierce may be the raging of the storm without.

Awaking next morning, light of heart, from the sweet sleep under the wholesome shelter of the tent, Mr. Vámbéry appeared in the eyes of Hadji Bilal unprofessionally cheerful. That faithful friend took him aside, therefore, and warned him that he must now put off the Efendi, and trust entirely to his dervish character, for he would excite surprise and disappointment if he did not, like the others, with a serious face distribute Fatiha or blessings, give the nefes or holy breath when summoned to the sick, and hold out his hand for the little presents which he would find the public of Central Asia always ready to bestow. "Pardon me if I seem to school you," said Hadji Bilal; "but it is for your good. You must have heard of the traveller who, when he reached the land of the one-eyed nation, to put himself on equality with them, kept one of his eyes shut." The Hungarian took counsel accordingly, had levees of sick persons, distributed blessings and "breath," wrote short sentences to serve as talismans, and took his fees in little kneeling mats and divers articles of food. The security obtained by travel in this character had one great drawback for a man whose whole purpose was investigation. If he touched upon any question relating to ordinary life, or showed curiosity of any sort, his friends asked wonderingly what a dervish, whose proper business was only God and religion, had to do with affairs of this transitory world. He dared not put any direct questions, but relied chiefly upon the liveliness of his attention, when, as he sat with dreamy aspect, beads in hand, the Turkomans, who are great talkers, discussed their affairs before him. Even about the line of ancient wall known as the wall of Iskender, or Alexander the Great, which was one feature of the neighbourhood of Gomushteppe, a place rich in remains of Greek domination and hidden monuments of ancient Iran civilisation, not a question could be asked by a dervish without exciting amazement.

In spite of the warm hospitality and the frequent religious feasts not unwelcome to Mr. Vámbéry's companions, at which every guest plunged his fist into the large wooden bowl supplied to every group of five or six, while horseflesh or camelflesh were the order of the day, and, says the traveller, "what other dishes represented our venison I must decline mentioning;" in spite of the reverence with which their prayers were sought, and their own ample experience of the bright side of Turkoman life and character, even the hadjis, somewhat to the manner born, yearned in a fortnight to get away from Gomushteppe. Even for the poorest

of the pilgrims, and those who had least reason to love the Persian, in the midst of all this lavish hospitality, the sight of the sufferings of the poor Persian slaves was really too much. Hardly a tent was without its chained Persian. The landing of the victims of each raid on Persian territory, when the gun from the water, that was to be heard every night, had announced the return of an alaman, or predatory cruiser, itself a painful sight, was only the beginning of miseries. The unhappy Persians, old or young, of any age from three to sixty, surprised by a night attack, and hurried away from their homes, sometimes with wounds, were clothed in Turkoman rags, loaded with galling chains, pegged down by the neck o' nights, treated with pitiless contempt, and with an active cruelty designed to force them into writing urgently for any ransom. To see their sufferings, without daring by word or look to express pity, was too much even for the Asiatic not inured to the trade of man-stealing. If not ransomed speedily, they are sent a little further in, to Etrek, a place of more cruel torment, where there is a truculent old khan accounted clever at extracting from the newly-caught slaves all useful information as to the ransom they may be made to yield, if any. The ransomable captives are the Turkoman's best prizes; for the difference may be great indeed between the price at which a child is valued by its father, or a father by his son, and the market-price of either in the slave-market at Bokhara. And it is not market-price that the first captor, on producing the article of traffic, usually gets. The Turkoman usually lives too much from hand to mouth, and is too poor, to keep his captives by him till he has enough to take himself into the market. When ransom cannot be got, he sells the produce of each alaman, as fast as he gets it, to a richer Turkoman: a middleman, who can afford to warehouse slaves till it is worth his while to go to Bokhara and sell. When he has reached Bokhara, he sells at once what is immediately saleable, leaves the rest in the hands of a slave-broker, and rides away. At present a slave fetches twenty or thirty pounds in Bokhara. In war time, when the market is glutted, the price may fall even to three pounds. In this barter there is a system of cheques and notes of hand, with this peculiarity, that when a debtor writes for his creditor, or gets to be written, an I O U, he puts it in his own pocket and rides away. If the creditor is asked why he does not take the acknowledgment, he replies, "What shall I do with it? I do not want to be reminded of the debt. The man who owes must not forget. It is for him, therefore, to keep the paper by him."

After three weeks in Gomushteppe, the pilgrims had a good opportunity of proceeding upon their journey. Their next great halting-place was Khiva, in the watered region of the Oxus, beyond the desert, and with desert again beyond it. The wicked and broken-down old Khan of Khiva had been recommended by his physicians to drink buffalo's milk, and he had

sent express to Gomushteppe a chief of caravans to buy him two pair of buffaloes, for in Khiva there are none. The leader of caravans went on to Astrabad, and on his return through Gomushteppe he and the buffaloes would be the best of escort to Khiva, for his experience of the desert was unrivalled.

In that escort, after three weeks in the tents by the Caspian and the river Gorghen, of which the innumerable fish scented the water, on went the Hungarian dervish. In the reedy haunts of the wild boar, numerous beyond conception, he was thrown, and narrowly escaped being ripped up. On his escape he was especially congratulated, for he was told "a death by the wound of a wild boar would send even the most pious Mussulman unclean into the next world, where a hundred years' burning in purgatorial fire would not purge away his uncleanness." The Afghan, who stuck by the false dervish, contrived to excite against Mr. Vámbéry the suspicions of the Khan of Khiva's caravan leader, but the faithful simple-hearted hadjis held by their friend, and the adventurer's skill as an Orientalist and linguist, now and at all times, carried him safe through every hour of peril.

On the way through the desert there was at one place a halt for one of the company to find his brother's grave. The dead man had been one of a caravan in which a fat Persian trader travelled as his guest. The Turkomans got scent of the Persian, who was going home with money in his pouch, and attacked the caravan. Although they cried out that they wanted only the fat Persian dog, who sobbed and begged that he might be surrendered, the host died in defence of his guest, and, dying, commended the Persian to his brother's guardianship. He had been safely conveyed to his own home, and the brother, on his return, now stayed to recover and carry back to his own land the body of the loyal dead.

Deeper in the true desert, where the few springs were ice-cold, bitter and stinking, when at one halting-time a search was made for water, a wild Tartar was found glaring alone in a cave, who rushed upon his disturbers with presented spear. He was an outcast from his tribe, a man with blood on his head, fugitive from the vendetta. Such fugitives will wander for years alone in the frightful solitudes, not daring to face their brother-man.

Khiva, between the wildernesses, lies with its gardens by a reach of barren desert earth that stretches to within a league of the city, as the long dry finger of death laid on the luxuriance of life.

At Khiva, his enemy, the Afghan, denounced Mr. Vámbéry to the first official who appeared, and again in the public bazaar. But the faithful hadjis, his travelling companions, gathered about him as a brother, and against all dangers the Hungarian dervish held by his assumed character, gave the khan his efficacious blessing, kicked aside the prime minister, to take for himself, as holy man, the place of honour by

the khan's side, satisfied all doubts, and baffled the most suspicious scrutiny. Only he could not show so much good breeding as to eat all the sheep's-tail fat to which he was hospitably pressed. To accept six, seven, or eight invitations in a day, and at each be required to avoid the rudeness of confessing one can eat no more, is beyond European powers in a company where Mr. Vámbéry noted that his pilgrim brethren (after their desert fare of little bread and less water) ate each of them a pound of fat from the sheep's-tail, two pounds of rice, besides bread, carrots, turnips, and radishes, and, to wash all down, swallowed, without exaggeration, from fifteen to sixteen large soup-plates of green tea. In Khiva, Mr. Vámbéry dispensed his blessings, and the "holy breath," and the health-dust which pilgrims bring from a house in Medina, said to have been the prophet's. Although he had here for his friend an old bey in high reverence, he was suspected to be only a sham dervish by the mehter, or first minister of the home department, who was only the less disposed to be friendly when he found the stranger patronised by the old bey, whom the minister regarded as his rival. And while foiling the attempts of the mehter to unmask him, and winning honour from the khan, a feeble bearded vicious devotee of lust and religious ceremonial, the European adventurer was admonished to be careful, by the frightful sights he saw within the precincts of the palace. In one court he found three hundred prisoners of war, who were covered with rags, and had for some days suffered starvation. They were parted into those of age and quality for sale as slaves, and those chained in iron collars, who were being taken to the gallows or the block. Whilst several were thus led to their death, "I saw," says Mr. Vámbéry, "how, at a sign from the executioner, eight aged men placed themselves down on their backs upon the earth. They were then bound hand and foot, and the executioner gouged out their eyes in turn, kneeling to do so on the breast of each poor wretch, and after every operation he wiped his knife, dripping with blood, upon the white beard of the hoary unfortunate." This was retribution for the stripping of a rich caravan; even to the food and clothes of the travellers, so that of sixty only eight had survived the hunger and cold of the desert. At Khiva a man is hanged if he but casts a look on a veiled woman, and the woman, buried up to the breasts in earth beside the gallows, is stoned to death with handballs of earth (stones there are none). "At the third discharge the poor victim is completely covered with dust, and the body, dripping with blood, is horribly disfigured, and the death which ensues alone puts an end to her torture."

If the Khan of Khiva came to London and were taken to the Opera, it would be well for the gentlemen and ladies who stare at each other through optical glasses or with naked eyes, that he is not Khan of England.

At Khiva, again, soldiers are literally paid by

the head for their slain enemies, and Mr. Vámbéry tells how, when he went to the khan's treasurer for the sum granted for his daily board, he found him sorting robes of honour, silken coats of staring colour with large flowers worked on them in gold, as four-headed, twelve-headed, twenty-headed, and forty-headed, coats. Next morning the traveller from Europe saw in the chief square of Khiva what the coats had been sorted for. About a hundred horsemen, covered with dust, rode in from the camp. Each brought at least one prisoner, and among the prisoners were children and women bound to the tail of the horse or the pommel of the saddle. The prisoners were brought in as presents to the khan, and then each soldier, as he came before the accountant, opened his sack, and, seizing it by the lower corners, as if he were emptying potatoes, rolled out of it the bearded or beardless heads with which he was to be accredited. As he reckoned them, the accountant with his foot kicked them together, until he had a large heap of several hundreds.

After nearly a month's residence at Khiva, the Hungarian dervish and his faithful comrades the *hadjis* departed richer than they came. For their blessings, and "breaths," and charms, they had been paid with honour and a multitude of gifts.

So, on they went to Bokhara, and having crossed the broad stream of the Oxus in a ferry-boat, travelled up its eastern bank: the Oxus on their right hand, the desert on their left. They were journeying towards a point from which there is a comparatively short and easy crossing of the great sandy desert between Bokhara and Khiva. But where the horseman can live, plundering bands supply the want of other peril, and, although the shorter desert route had been chosen after learning that the way was clear, two suppliants for bread met the pilgrims by the way, and told how they and others had been stopped by a band of a hundred and fifty horsemen. Hereupon, the faces of the asses and the dromedaries were turned back, and with hot speed the way was retraced to the point from which the greater desert track commenced—a track over sands so inhospitable and fatal to those over whom they are blown by the wind Tebbad, that no robber dares make them his haunt.

Having laid in a stock of the sweet Oxus water—which is said to be, after deposit of the grit it bears with it, more delicious than even that of the Nile—the pilgrims plunged, with as little rest as might be, into the desert known as the Life Destroyer. It was July, and that desert route is considered to be safe only in winter, after heavy falls of snow. The first station bears the name of Adamkrylgan, the Place where Men Perish; and little heaps of the bleached bones of men and beasts were piled up here and there on the wayside by previous travellers, to mark the track. That central Asiatic wilderness is a great sea of sand, sometimes rolled into high waves, and sometimes

rippled like the surface of a lake; not a bird flies overhead; there is no worm or beetle under foot. The Oxus water disappeared by evaporation faster than any calculation had supposed. Of the camels, wearied by the speed of the retreat before the desert was plunged into, two died, and still there must be all haste made, for if the Tebbad swept over them while they were in the deep roll of the sands, the whole caravan would be overwhelmed, and all would perish. Two men died of thirst, the cry for "water" the one only incessant sound from their lips; while every man clung to the drops in his own water-skin as to the drops of his own life. Each slept with his water-skin in his embrace. The father hid away his store of water from the son, the brother from his brother. When at last they came near the Khalata mountains, and the sand lay thinner upon the hard subsoil, a cloud of dust was seen approaching; the camels, uttering a loud cry, fell on their knees and pressed their heads on the ground, with their faces turned from the blast; the pilgrims buried themselves within the shelter formed by the bodies of the camels; and the first sand-shower of the hot Tebbad fell like flakes of fire upon their bodies. The wind rushed by, with a dull clattering sound, leaving them all covered with sand two inches thick. Had it come over them when they were six miles deeper in the desert, all would have perished. The passage of this desert was the worst suffering endured by the young Hungarian, who found himself at the end of it half dead in the hut of some kindly Persian slaves.

At last they were on cultivated land again, near Bokhara the Noble, which accounts itself the capital of Central Asia, and the Rome of Islam. Of the three officials who came out to meet the caravan, one was impressed, as usual, by the European cast of Mr. Vámbéry's tell-tale face, tanned as it was; and in Bokhara, too, he had active suspicions to contend with. But again he played his part so well as a great *mollah*, that he soon found himself in the midst of undoubting faith and honour. The emir was not then in Bokhara, and the suspicious lord in office, after surrounding the suspected man with spies who sought to entrap him into showing fellow-feeling with the *Frenghis*, at last, in the shape of an invitation to a *pilow*, brought him into a picked circle of Bokhariot ulemas, who were quietly to subject his pretensions to strict scrutiny. When he had got safe through that ordeal, the government was satisfied, and he was free to go his own way about the mysterious city in which Stoddart and Conolly found only their martyrdom. Questions of any kind upon political events, Mr. Vámbéry, in his character of dervish, might not ask; but he could freely use his eyes and ears in the wonderful town where men go about in the streets with four-thonged whips to drive people into the mosques, and, examining passers-by and even greybeards on the principles of Islamism, send them to school for eight days or a fortnight if they find

them ill informed. The emir is very strict, but exacts most of his nobles, being, as his subjects say in his praise, "Killer of elephants and protector of mice." His face is against luxury. The palace housekeeping cost less than half a sovereign a day. When his commandant-in-chief, who had been a great man in Persia allied to its royal race, built a handsome one-storied house in Bokhara, adorned with glass windows and other luxuries, the emir waited until it was finished, and then banished its owner for contempt of religion, confiscated the house, and, refusing to sell it for a high price that was offered, pulled it down, ordered the very ruins to be wasted when they seemed too ornamental, and, the better to point the moral, sold its timber to a baker at a mean price for the heating of his oven.

But with all the glory of Bokhara the Noble, and all the ostentatious piety, one thing was noticeable by the hadjis and their fellow-travellers;—they got as much lip-honour as in Khiva, if not more; but whereas in Khiva they had been lavishly enriched with gifts, in Bokhara no man gave them so much as a farthing, and some were obliged to sell even their asses for the means of life. Those of the hadjis who had not branched off already to their respective homes, were glad, therefore, when they could, to hire a couple of carts to carry them on to Samarcand.

Mr. Vámbéry had agreed with his friends to go on with them to Samarcand, and either proceed thence eastward with those going further, or there turn back, and make the return journey by way of Herat. A caravan leader from Herat was in Bokhara who would return in about three weeks, and a provisional arrangement was made for meeting with him at Kerki, on the further bank of the Oxus, if the dervish did not yield to the temptation to push onward towards Kashgar, Aksa, and Khoten. To Samarcand the way was not difficult. Mr. Vámbéry saw on the road, square milestones, some entire, others broken, which had been set up by Timour the Tartar. The present emir, following his notion of civilisation, has set up here and there small terraces for prayer.

Into Samarcand the pious emir was in a few days about to return from a victorious campaign. The hadjis wanted to see the entry, and, on the day after it, Mr. Vámbéry, with a little sense of renewed danger and suspicion, was summoned to the presence of the emir. But he went boldly into the august presence, recited

his prayer, and then, as became his dervish character, took his seat, without permission, close to the royal person. The emir—who is himself a mollah, and to whom the suspicious minister at Bokhara had made his report—tried with a fixed look to disconcert the stranger, but the young Hungarian was not to be disconcerted. Throughout the interview he held his own, well ornamenting his speech with Persian sentences and verses from the Koran. He was dismissed with a gift, and the command to visit the emir a second time in Bokhara.

But now enough had been learnt, enough had been risked for the sake of learning it, and the best policy was to quit Samarcand with all speed and join the caravan for Herat, on the other bank of the Oxus. Parted unwillingly from his faithful and kind friends the hadjis, whom still, for his own sake and theirs, he dared not undecieve, the sham dervish turned back, travelled among nomads as a hadji pedlar, with knives, needles, thread, glass-beads, and cornelians, in his pack. On the other side of the Oxus, he and those comrades with him were seized as runaway slaves making for Persia. That difficulty was overcome, and having, through divers other adventures, arrived at Herat, where he had to resist the charge of being a disguised Englishman, he left Herat on the fifteenth of November, by the great caravan bound for Meshed, and so got back to Teheran, after his wonderful ten months' tour, upon which he had set out on the twenty-eighth of March. Finally, about the middle of last June, Mr. Vámbéry came to London to tell his traveller's tale to our Royal Geographical Society and to the English public.

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